UNIVERSITY OF
RHODE ISLAND
MAGAZINE
SUMMER 2021

Marc Parlange
Can't Wait to Meet You

URI's 12th president has lived and worked around the globe. Now, he's ready to roll up his sleeves and lead URI into its next transformative decade.

Aperture

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP PHOTO CONTEST

URI's fourth annual Research and Scholarship Photo Contest attracted a stunning collection of photos from URI students, staff, and faculty.

The contest provides a unique opportunity for our researchers and scholars to convey their ideas and work, as well as their unique perspectives, through the images they capture.

We're proud to share this year's top-placing photos, which represent a range of disciplines—from biology to nonviolence and peace studies. They include work by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty and staff, and they reinforce that time-tested adage: "A picture is worth a thousand words."

First Place

"BABY BLUE MAXIMA CLAM"

Michael Corso '24, aquaculture and fisheries science major

This photo was taken at Love the Reef in Wilmington, Mass., where Corso works and will conduct an independent study. At Love the Reef, Corso says, "coral and other invertebrates are grown and propagated in life-support tank systems, holding hundreds of gallons of artificial seawater. In the wild, a clam like this may live for over 200 years. But captive propagation and growth may be the only hope of survival for many integral reef species, including giant clams. By continuing research and development of new sustainable aquaculture methods, we may be able to protect even the most vulnerable creatures."

Second Place

"SERENITY"

Thupten Tendhar, coordinator, URI Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies

Tendhar, a Level III Kingian nonviolence trainer and former longtime member of the Drepung Loseling Monastery in South India, says that in his role at URI, he teaches "peace of mind and the interconnected nature of phenomena. This photo, taken at Indian Lake in Wakefield, Rhode Island, shows how humans can learn, enjoy, and derive a positive impact from nature to feel peaceful and enhance our sense of belonging, realizing that we are all a small part of a bigger universe."

Third Place

"UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH A CECROPIA MOTH"

Gillian Mitkowski '23, biology and psychology double major

Mitkowski, who works as a student lab assistant at URI's Biocontrol Lab in the URI greenhouses, where this photo was taken, says, "The cecropia moth (*Hylaphora cecropia*) is the largest moth native to North America, with an average wingspan of 5–7 inches! They are very docile, and this guy posed for me for quite some time. Rearing of *H. cecropia* moths is part of the non-target research done at the URI Biocontrol Lab to assist with USDA spotted lantern fly biological control research."

Honorable Mention

"OFF THE SHOULDER OF ORION"

Kevin Gilmore, adjunct instructor, art and art history

This photo, taken at the Frosty Drew Obersevatory and Sky Theater at Ninigret Park in Charlestown, Rhode Island, was part of Gilmore's preparation and research for a project called "The 79 Moons of Jupiter." The project is a live, audio-visual installation and performance piece, for which Gilmore and his colleague, Jacob Richman (video and filmmaking instructor), won a URI "Winnie" grant. Gilmore says, "I am seated here operating my synthesizers, the constellation Orion (my 10-year-old son's name is Orion, too) just off my right shoulder, and the moon in a waxing crescent phase. The wisp of red light artifact from the long exposure intrigues me, and on a personal level, felt symbolic of a father passing along his quest of creative adventures to his son."

Honorable Mention

"THE AMERICAN WOODCOCK PROJECT"

Justin Moore '21, wildlife and conservation biology major

This photo was taken in Arcadia, Rhode Island, during the American woodcock project led by graduate student Colby Slezak and Professor Scott McWilliams. Moore says, "While tracking the hens, we found a number of nests, where some made it past the incubation stage to this (hatchling) stage. These three 2-day-old hatchlings are being fitted with radio telemetry transmitters for tracking and monitoring in an effort to better understand how the species uses the area."

Honorable Mention

"POLYCARPA AND CAULERPA"

Erin Borbee, doctoral student in biological and environmental sciences

This photo of ink-spot sea squirts (*Polycarpa aureate*) and sea grapes (*Caulerpa racemosa*), was taken on a reef in Misool, Indonesia. Borbee says, "URI's Lane Lab and Humphries Lab collaborate with the Marine Biodiversity and Biosystematics Lab at Bogor Agricultural University in Indonesia, using environmental DNA (eDNA) to evaluate biodiversity in coral reef ecosystems across Indonesia. The water and sediment around the organisms are full of microbial life, as well as fragments of DNA, from fish and invertebrates that live here or pass through. We capture and sequence that DNA to see the diversity on a reef and begin to look at factors that may influence that diversity."

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Natural disasters like tsunamis, volcanoes, hurricanes, and earthquakes spur fear and fascination. URI scientists are working to help prevent and mitigate the damage they cause.

Left: Evan Pagano ’15, M.B.A. ’19, captured this scene of a horseshoe crab in the surf at Camp Cronin in Narragansett, R.I. “Horseshoe crabs,” Pagano says, “make their way to the shore in large groups each spring. These prehistoric creatures crawl out of the ocean according to the moon cycle to dig holes in the sand and lay their eggs.”

PHOTOS: EVAN PAGANO; GRACE KELLY; COURTESY MARC PARLANGE; NORA LEWIS; NOAA

Feedback

Write to us: **urimag@uri.edu**
Visit us and comment at **uri.edu/magazine**

FROM THE EDITOR
In the last issue, we wished our outgoing president, David M. Dooley, farewell. URI is a better place today because of his tireless efforts. In this issue, we introduce you to our incoming president, Marc Parlange. We look forward to welcoming him and working with him as he takes the helm of our beloved University.

This issue is jam-packed with stories you shouldn't miss. One of my favorites is Harrington School adjunct faculty member Betty Cotter's essay *(page 9)* about a school librarian, Roberta Sabella '69, M.L.S. '72. I share Cotter's love for libraries, and URI has one of the best library and information studies programs around. Look for a story about URI's alumni librarians, and learn why librarians are so important—today more than ever—in the fall issue of the magazine.

—Barbara Caron, Editor-in-Chief

FOR THE BIRDS
I enjoyed reading "An Avian Affection" (spring 2021). I am pleased that URI invested in a strong ornithological program, as there was none when I was a grad student in zoology (1967–69). Professors Paton and McWilliams, and research assistant Charles Clarkson add wonderful dimensions—as does the Kingston Wildlife Research Station (not present in the '60s). My M.S. in avian research (advised by a mammalogist!) at URI, followed by a Ph.D. at the University of Maryland, led me to a 35-year career in bird research at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, then to the University of Virginia, where, as a research professor, I advised Charles Clarkson for his Ph.D. program. So now I enjoy two connections with URI.

—R. Michael Erwin, M.S. '69

THANK YOU, URI
Compliments to everyone involved in bringing the *University of Rhode Island Magazine* to first-class publication status. I find it enjoyable and uplifting to read about the activities, academic accomplishments, research, and activism of faculty, students, and alumni—especially with such broad reach with national and international impact. It is amazing to see how URI has grown and developed through the years.

During my career as a civil engineer, I was fortunate to travel and work in the Caribbean, Europe, South America, Africa, western U.S., and Hawaii, with many wonderful and unique experiences for which I express gratitude to URI.

—Tom Pizza '70

HONORING HEROIC WOMEN
My heart was warmed by "Redefining Nursing" (spring 2021) and the photo of Diane Healy Dexter '50. My aunt, Annette Frisella '52, is also a surviving member of that very first class. In her room, she keeps a photo (*above*) of the pinning ceremony for those brave young ladies. I believe there are 2 or 3 other feisty old ladies from that amazing class still kicking around, and who still send Christmas cards!

Annette would love to receive cards from any of her URI friends, especially those docs and nurses who knew her as "Jet." Her address is Watson Fields, 201 Watson Rd., Dover, NH 03820. Or send email to me at tnjvdl@gmail.com. Thank you for publishing the article to honor heroic women from our past.

—Dr. Terri Vanderlinde

= SOCIAL SNAPS =

HATS OFF TO THE CLASS OF 2021!
Congrats to the winners of this year's #myURIcap contest: Nicole Connelly ("Rhody Pride"), Bethany DeLoof ("URI Affiliation"), and Mattie Kaplan ("Most Creative"). Congratulations and thank you to all who entered!

#URI2021 @universityofri

Nicole Connelly

Bethany DeLoof

Mattie Kaplan

PHOTO: COURTESY URI SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

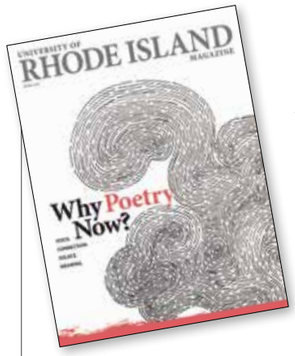
MISSED OPPORTUNITY
Opening the spring 2021 issue, I was excited to see a lengthy article on the evolution of nursing. I work with nurses in hospitals and other facilities across Massachusetts, applying the journalism skills I learned at URI to help nurses communicate with each other and with the public.

The vast majority of nurses I talk to every day provide direct patient care, in places such as intensive care units, emergency departments, medical-surgical units, operating rooms, schools, home care settings and long-term care facilities. Their experiences, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, can be harrowing, beautiful, and frustrating. These bedside nurses are powerful advocates for their patients and often speak passionately about modern challenges such as just-in-time staffing models that lead to unsafe patient assignments, workplace violence, and the closure of local services by large health-care systems. I was surprised to see critical topics like these go uncovered in the article. It was a missed opportunity not to include more voices of frontline nurses.

—Joseph Markman '08 Associate Director of Communications, Massachusetts Nurses Association

Correction

With apologies to William Blake, we cited Blake's poem "The Tyger" as "The Tiger" in the spring 2021 issue. Our sincere apologies for the error.



Why Poetry Now?

POETRY PARODY
Normally I read *URI Magazine* from front to back, article by article, in leisure moments over a month or two. But when the spring 2021 issue arrived and I saw the cover story, "Why Poetry Now?" I opened it immediately, turned to that, and read it. As a retired civil engineer who fancies himself a poet (with one book of poetry published), I found the article to be excellent—captivating and illuminating. Of interest was that Professor Jones taught Leigh Hunt's "Jenny Kiss'd Me," as I've written a parody of that piece, "Hunter Licked Me." Best of luck to all the poets associated with URI.

Hunter Licked Me
Hunter licked me on the nose,
showing me his deep affection
Whimpering, this dachshund knows
who provides food and protection.
Tell me that my poems won't sell.
that no muse has ever picked me.
Call me crazy, but then yell
"Hunter licked me."

—David A. Todd '74

THE RICHARD WILMARTH PAPERS
I found the spring 2021 cover story "Why Poetry Now?" timely and timeless. URI has had faculty and students, past and present, who have cultivated an interest in poetry and writing. For example, the library's Distinctive Collections houses the Richard Wilmarth Papers (B.A. '88 M.A. '91; M.F.A. Naropa University). Wilmarth was widely published by small presses and operated a literary small press that published a number of "post-beat" writers. The Richard Wilmarth Papers are another resource for URI students of poetry, literature, and cultural history.

—Arnold W. Peterson, M.A. '86, M.S.L.I.S. '95

WHAT "WHY POETRY NOW?" MISSED
In "Why Poetry Now?" (spring 2021), a glaring omission was any reference to the inspiring work by the late URI English professor Paul Petrie (1928–2012), who, for 30 years, shared his poems with students, staff, and community. Petrie's work should have found its way to the recommended titles at the end of the piece. The story might have also mentioned the numerous poetry readings that took place on the URI campus from such Pulitzer Prize-winning poets as the late (Rhode Island-born) Galway Kinnell, Philip Levine, and Allen Ginsberg. Finally, there should have been a mention about the URI Library Special Collections department, which houses numerous first editions of important poetry, further demonstrating the University's deep commitment to poetry.

—Robert Israel, M.A. '76

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Currents

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= IN BRIEF =

Gulf Stream Changes Predict Ocean Warming

The Northwest Atlantic Shelf is one of the fastest-changing regions in the global ocean, currently experiencing marine heat waves, altered fisheries, and a surge in sea-level rise. GSO researcher Afonso Gonçalves Neto, Ph.D. '20, was lead author of a recently published paper in *Communications Earth & Environment* describing the findings of a URI research team that studied the changes.

Gonçalves Neto explained that when the Gulf Stream migrates closer to the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, as it did in 2008, "it blocks the southwestward transport of the Labrador Current that would otherwise provide cold, fresh, oxygen-rich water to the North American shelf." URI Associate Professor Jaime Palter, co-author and Gonçalves Neto's mentor, noted that these findings help explain why the last decade was the hottest on record at the edge of the Northeast U.S. and Canada, as the delivery of cold water to the region got choked off by the presence of the Gulf Stream.

The team noted the important finding that the satellite-observed signature of the Gulf Stream's position relative to the Grand Banks precedes subsurface shelf-warming by over a year. "By monitoring satellite observations for changes near the Grand Banks, we can predict changes coming to the Northeast U.S. shelf with potentially enough lead time to inform fishery management decision-making," said GSO graduate student and co-author Joe Langan.

Teaching Chickens New Tricks

Animal behavior students know that animal training skills could make or break their chances of landing a highly competitive position at a zoo or aquarium after graduating.

Junior Jessica Weidemann learned those skills in her advanced animal behavior class at URI's Peckham Farm. The most challenging part of the class? Training a chicken.

Chickens are notoriously difficult to train. Weidemann, one of 13 students in Assistant Professor Justin Richard's class, trained her assigned chicken to select a particular color card from a set of various colors.

"You can train a dog without knowing what you're doing because they're eager to please humans," Richard said. "Chickens don't care about you, and they're naturally fearful of you. It takes patience and attention to detail to train the birds."

Senior Mia Luzietti, who began a job as an animal care specialist at Racine Zoo in Wisconsin in April 2021, says the class helped her land her job. "[During my interviews,] I was able to discuss operant conditioning and positive reinforcement, not only from a place of understanding the topic but from real training experience, which many facilities were impressed by."

Students from last year's class found jobs or internships at the U.S. Navy Marine Mammal Program in San Diego, SeaWorld in San Antonio, Coral World in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Buttonwood Park Zoo in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and elsewhere.

PHOTOS: SOPHIA LOUW; DANIEL TUTTLE

News Ticker

RAM FUND TAKES FIRST
College of Business students working with URI's student-run equity fund recently captured top honors for the performance of their investment portfolios at the largest student-run financial conference in the world.

NURSING RANKINGS CLIMB
URI's graduate nursing program rose to 53rd (top 9 percent) in the *U.S. News & World Report* national rankings. The Doctor of Nursing Practice program also rose—to the top 13%—ranking 80th in the nation.

FINE ARTS IMPROVEMENTS
R.I. voters approved a higher education bond in March, providing $57.3 million for renovations to the Fine Arts Center, home to URI's theater, music, and art programs. The project will be pivotal in providing rich cultural and artistic experiences for students and the community.

CYBER DESIGNATION
URI was added to the NSF's prestigious list of universities benefitting from the CyberCorps Scholarship for Service program, which aims to boost the cybersecurity workforce with scholarships and stipends for students interested in taking federal, state, local, or tribal jobs after graduating.

NEW CORONAVIRUS TEST
A team of researchers, led by Professor Angela Slitt, has developed a new saliva-based test that is accurate, simple, and cost-effective. The test, which could greatly impact access to effective testing outside of the United States, is expected to be submitted to the FDA for Emergency Use Authorization.

= QUAD ANGLES =

A School Librarian Who Made a Difference

School librarian Roberta Sabella Mansfield '69, M.L.S. '72, did more than just help Betty Cotter find books. She fostered Cotter's love of literature and helped her find a sense of belonging.

By Betty J. Cotter

The face on the obituary page brought a flood of memories. Although her last name had changed, I instantly recognized my beloved school librarian, Roberta Sabella Mansfield.

Mansfield, a Cranston resident, died of cancer on Sept. 22, 2020, and I never got a chance to tell her what a difference she made in my life.

In the fall of 1971, I was an awkward, bookish, sometimes-bullied sixth-grader. The only place I felt comfortable was our elementary school's library, a small book collection tucked into the eaves of the second-floor auditorium. I was reading my way through its fiction stacks and those of our even tinier village library in Shannock.

Miss Sabella, who was finishing up her graduate degree, was our new librarian. She immediately sensed my love of books, and by the end of September I had been excused from the dreaded recess to work in the school library.

I loved everything about my new job: rolling the shelving cart around the cramped aisles and returning books to their rightful places, in perfect Dewey decimal order, of course. Filing the due-date cards alphabetically when a book was circulated; tucking them back into their sleeves when the books were returned.

Some tasks were reserved for the librarian. I watched with interest as she unpacked new volumes and covered them in shiny protective plastic. Every day she changed the due date stamp, which made a satisfying click-it sound when she checked out books.

Mostly, I was in awe of Miss Sabella herself. She was kindly, young, and smart. She did not screech at us to make her presence known. You could tell she had sized up the small library and wanted to make it better.

In the fall of 1971, I was an awkward, bookish, sometimes-bullied sixth-grader. The only place I felt comfortable was our elementary school's library.

She brought in a volunteer, a stylish young woman named Miss Reeves who loaned me *Jane Eyre*. When I accidentally crinkled one of the pages, I was overcome with shame, but neither Miss Reeves nor Miss Sabella said anything about it.

Mostly, the new librarian trusted me. She sent me to the office with her outgoing mail. Having almost lost one of my father's checks on the way home from the post office the year before, I knew this was no token responsibility.

Of course, I was not the only student volunteer. In mid-year she organized us into a Library Club. When my fellow students elected me president, I finally felt like I belonged.

At home, I organized my own small collection of Scholastic paperbacks into a home library. My mother bought me a date stamp and I fashioned circulation slips out of cardstock. Using my mother's manual Royal typewriter, I created stickers for the books' spines.

Sixth grade came to a close all too quickly. Ahead was the mysterious and frightening prospect of the junior-senior high school.

I was sad to leave behind Miss Sabella. She had recognized my love of literature and given it space to grow. She rescued me from the playground's tortures and gave me a role model to follow.

That June, she mailed me a letter. "Thank you very much for your picture," she wrote. "I have it stuck up on my bulletin board, and I can't help but always smile back at you. I really can't tell you how much your work in the library helped me this year. To tell you the truth, it was much too quiet up there before you began to come up! I'll be looking forward to your visit next September."

Alas, that visit never came to pass, because she left, presumably to take a better job elsewhere. Over the years, as I became a newspaper reporter, wrote books, and taught literature, I often thought of her influence.

Sometimes all a child really needs is to be seen for who he or she is. Roberta Sabella Mansfield did that for me, and I am grateful. •

Betty J. Cotter is an adjunct faculty member in URI's Harrington School of Communication and Media. Roberta Sabella Mansfield '69, M.L.S. '72, worked as a librarian in the Coventry public schools for 39 years.

This story was originally published in *The Providence Journal* on Oct. 31, 2020.

PHOTO: JOHNNY MCCLUNG

= RHODY SCHOLARS =

Pursuing a Medical Career with a Humanities Perspective

A triple major in biology, sociology, and Italian, Julia Santini '21 is heading to medical school with a broad perspective.

Sometimes, seemingly disparate decisions have a design that comes clear only in hindsight.

Such is true for Julia Santini '21, who is entering Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School this summer. Santini was admitted to Brown through the Early Identification Program, a cooperative venture between Brown, URI, and a select few other Rhode Island schools. The program exists, in part, to increase opportunities for Rhode Island students to pursue medical careers.

In 2020, medical schools nationwide saw a 20 percent rise in applications—a phenomenon the media has linked to Dr. Anthony Fauci's prominence during the pandemic. Journalists and medical schools alike have taken to calling it the "Fauci effect." And Santini has something in common with America's most recognizable doctor, who was a classics major as an undergraduate. Like Dr. Fauci, Santini is equally at home in the STEM disciplines and the humanities.

Initially a biology major in the Honors Program, Santini added a second major, sociology, and then a third, Italian. By her sophomore year, she'd decided on a career in medicine. "There are many careers you can go into with a biology major," she says. "But I always had health care in the back of my mind."

"In the beginning, it seemed like my three fields of study were diverse and segmented, but they're actually interconnected. I see them really as three different ways to look at people. In biology, you're looking at people's cells and organ systems and how those things make a human being function. In sociology, you're looking at how people become who they are based on their social context and what impact their environment has on them. As for Italian, I love studying culture and looking at what makes humans create art and language.

"I really see it all as three different perspectives on humanity."

For her honors project and thesis, Santini investigated home-birthing practices in the United States and around the globe. "Women's health is something that I've become increasingly interested in," she says. "I did an independent study looking at global perspectives on reproduction as part of my sociology degree."

Santini was president of URI's pre-med club, secretary of URI Women in STEM, and, pre-pandemic, was involved in Alternative Spring Break, a student-run global service organization. She also led a student group working with Habitat for Humanity in Guatemala. As a pre-health advisor for URI's Pre-Health Professions Advising Program, Santini talked with incoming students about the program, as well as courses and clubs they might be interested in joining.

Santini is still considering what area of medicine she'll specialize in. She's interested in primary care and family medicine.

"Part of the reason why I'm interested in family medicine is that that specialty allows you to take a holistic view of people and the community." •

—Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

PHOTO: NORA LEWIS

= BIG IDEAS. BOLD PLANS. =

Tradition Meets Innovation

This fall, the University's campuses will fully welcome back students, parents, alumni, and friends. Members of our community can revisit their favorite spots, and alumni coming back will find the familiar, traditional aspects of campus much the same. URI will also resume an ambitious plan for growth, as part of *Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island.* These new and upcoming projects tie into the campaign priorities of the URI Learning Experience and Strategic Opportunities, providing cutting-edge facilities to inspire students and faculty.

The Fascitelli Center for Advanced Engineering

The world-class facility that first welcomed students in 2019 was open for less than one year when COVID shut down much of campus. Named to honor the longstanding support from Michael D. '78, Hon. '08 and Elizabeth C. Fascitelli, including a $10 million gift for research equipment, The Fascitelli Center will put its cutting-edge labs, collaborative learning spaces, and sunlit Junius "Babe" Gertz Café back to full use this fall.

Harrington School of Communication and Media

The Harrington School, with its Harrington Hub located in Ranger Hall, provides professional equipment for audio and video recording as well as emerging digital media. The newly renovated broadcast studio in Chafee Hall served a critical role for faculty and University leaders to deliver recorded messages to members of the URI community learning and working remotely. The Hub is state-of-the-art thanks to contributions from Richard J. '73, Hon. '02 and Jean Harrington.

Fine Arts Center

Plans for the University's newest building initiative include 82,000 square feet of space for the music and art departments. Along with a new exterior, the space will feature updated studios as well as new areas for digital art, graphic design, photography, and videography. The building will also offer a new lobby in front of the Robert E. Will Theatre; improved access to J-Studio, the smaller black box theater; and two new modern acting classrooms. Work has started and will take about two years.

Ballentine Hall

The College of Business has drawn up plans for Ballentine Hall, including 7,000 square feet of new space and 13,000 square feet of renovated space. The College has seen growing enrollment and looks to incorporate the latest technology used by the world's leading employers. The Alfred J. Verrecchia Center for Business Excellence and the Kent and Diane Fannon Center for Student Success will each prepare students to be future-ready and collaborate as they would in a business environment. Other improvements include a business analytics and AI lab and an advanced financial trading room.

Narragansett Bay Campus

The Narragansett Bay Campus Master Plan sets ambitious goals for upgraded facilities to advance world-renowned ocean research and graduate education. Improvements over a 10-year period will include a pier to accommodate the new research vessel coming to URI in 2023, an ocean technology design laboratory, and a designated center for marine operations. Construction is scheduled to begin on the new pier in the fall, and the design lab is slated for completion in 2024.

Soloviev Family Basketball Practice Facility

The $8 million project has received tremendous support from alumni and friends, including a lead gift from Stefan Soloviev and his family, to transform West Gymnasium into an advanced practice facility for the men's and women's basketball teams. Student-athletes will have 24-hour access to training and technology to enhance their experience and refine their craft.

= THE CLASS OF 2021 =

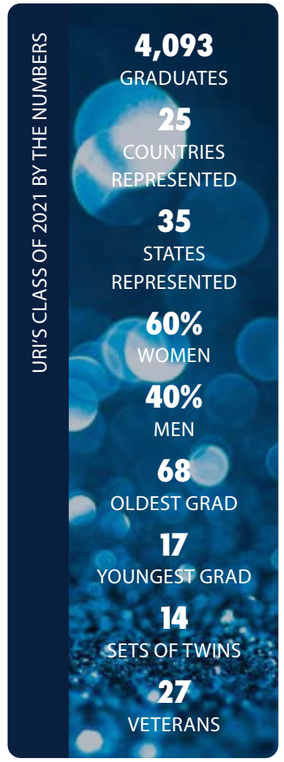
Commencement Comes to Life

URI's newest alumni walked across the stage at Meade Stadium in May. Get to know our student Commencement speakers and the Class of 2021 by the numbers.

Plans for Commencement were complicated, as COVID-19 restrictions changed rapidly throughout the spring. In the end, URI held its 135th Commencement—in-person—at Meade Stadium on May 21–23. Each college held a separate ceremony, allowing two family members per student to attend. Events were livestreamed and recorded for those not in attendance.

A prerecorded main ceremony included a keynote address from Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, who uncovered the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. Addresses were also given by URI's 2021 student Commencement speakers, Edhaya Thennarasu '21 and Frank Martinez, M.A. '21.

—Dave Lavallee '79, M.P.A. '87



EDHAYA THENNARASU '21

Undergraduate student speaker Edhaya Thennarasu '21 received her B.A. in communication and media studies with a minor in theater. Originally from Chennai, India, Thennarasu had all but given up on pursuing higher education, finding school too mechanical and too focused on grades. She says URI changed that.

In her address, Thennarasu mourned the loss of snow days due to remote learning—"RIP snow days," she said. And she praised the URI community's response to the recent Black Lives Matter protests: "When I saw people in this community taking to the streets to support their brothers and sisters of color in a time of unbearable injustice, I learned that education means standing up for others and what you believe in, even if it is way out of your comfort zone."

What's next for Thennarasu? "My dream," she says, "would be to work in the entertainment or journalism world, for a company like Disney."

Thennarusu's speech ended on an inspirational note: "Today is ... a testament that every single one of you here are slingshots. If you are pulled back by the hardships of time, society, injustice, and circumstance, know that it is only to launch you forward, with unstoppable force and energy to make an indelible mark of excellence in the future." •

FRANK MARTINEZ, M.A. '21

Graduate School student speaker Frank Martinez, M.A. '21, received his master's degree in international relations. Originally from Cuba, he earned his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Havana, and lived in Washington, D.C., Miami, and Anaheim, California, before coming to URI.

In his address, Martinez said, "I have faith in the future. I was born and raised in Cuba and came to the United States in 2015. If you had told me six years ago that today I would be delivering this speech after graduating from a master's program, I would have never believed you.

"What we have to learn to do," he also said, "is to embrace different cultures and languages. My training in international relations and diplomacy at URI gave me the tools to not only embrace different cultures but to thrive in them."

Martinez will attend Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University for a second master's degree.

"I see myself working for the State Department or the United Nations in a policy-making role," he says. "I would work anywhere in the world where I could contribute to the well-being of society, a country, or people." •

PHOTOS: ALEX DECICCIO; NORA LEWIS; GETTY IMAGES

Congratulations Class of 2021!

Commencement ceremonies were held throughout the weekend of May 21–23 at Meade Stadium. The evening light was fittingly dramatic as College of Engineering graduates received their diplomas on Friday, May 21.

PHOTO: SEAN MCVEIGH

= MEDIA SPOTLIGHT =

You Can Quote Me

On selecting Marc Parlange as URI's 12th president:

"Parlange has advanced global scholarly research, navigated financial challenges, built strong industry partnerships and developed a depth of experience in creating more diverse and inclusive communities, especially for the most historically marginalised members of our society."

—Thomas M. Ryan '75, Hon. '99, URI trustee and chair of the presidential search committee

The Canberra Times

On the findings of outside researchers who reported the existence of "forever chemicals" and other pollutants around the summit of Mount Everest:

"Everest is treasured very highly as a unique monument for the globe. It's kind of sad to see very high concentrations at some places on the mountain. We say, 'Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints,' but we leave chemicals."

—Rainer Lohmann, professor of oceanography and director of the URI Superfund Research Center on Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances

The Washington Post

On the value of increased fat stores and the many fascinating ways birds' bodies change to prepare for seasonal migration:

"Flying is the most energy-intensive form of locomotion. But it's also more efficient if you want to go farther, faster. You actually get better fuel economy when you use fat as fuel for a flying animal compared to a runner."

—Scott McWilliams, professor of wildlife ecology and physiology

Audubon

On how the pandemic has tested long-held notions that work is best performed in a traditional workplace and reliant on face-to-face interactions:

"From what I know, engagement of employees is the key to successful organizations. If employees are engaged, they're going to do what is necessary to collaborate, to reconnect, to be in touch with other employees when they need to be."

—Aimee Phelps, Ph.D. '15, teaching professor of management and human resources

Providence Business News

On early small-scale efforts suggesting that dogs can be trained to sniff out COVID infections:

"There seems to be evidence that COVID patients might emit ammonia at trace levels that dogs could be sniffing."

—Otto Gregory '75, M.S. '78, professor of chemical engineering

Scientific American

On a paper that, if proven correct, would not only challenge Einstein's theory of general relativity but also prove the existence of near-extremal black holes:

"We would love to know if nature would even allow for such a beast to exist. It would have pretty dramatic implications for our field."

—Gaurav Khanna, professor of physics and director of URI Research Computing

Wired

On the effectiveness of treating clothing with permethrin to protect against tick-borne diseases including Lyme:

"We've done tests with clothing, and we can watch the ticks fall off and die. So there is good scientific evidence that this works and it actually works pretty well."

—Thomas Mather, professor of entomology and director of the URI Center for Vector-Borne Disease and the TickEncounter Resource Center

The New York Times

= RHODE TAKEN =

Design with the Planet in Mind

Take the principles of craft brewing and slow food, apply them to the apparel industry, and what you get is Rocky Clark, a new kind of clothing company that a young URI alumnus is lovingly building from the ground up.

Joe Rotondo '16, entrepreneur and CEO of Rocky Clark Clothing, believes an apparel line can have a conscience.

Initially conceived as a side hustle, his jeans company suits customers who love fashion and wish to reduce their carbon footprint. Textiles, categorized as municipal solid waste by the Environmental Protection Agency, account for 17 million tons of landfilled material annually. Part of the problem is disposable clothing, or fast fashion: garments made cheaply by manufacturers using exploitative labor practices and shoddy fabrics. Another issue: People dispose of clothing long before it's worn out.

Some eco-conscious consumers respond by mending or upcycling clothes. Designers like Rotondo battle fast fashion by using organic fabric and designing for long-term wear. Rocky Clark jeans, for instance, come with patches at the knees since that's where material first shows signs of wear.

Rotondo, whose has a degree in textiles, fashion merchandising and design (TMD) from the College of Business, began his studies at URI as a kinesiology major. Both disciplines influence his design. "I wanted to study kinesiology initially," he says, "because I love sports. I realized what I really wanted, though, was to design uniforms and sports jerseys.

"But kinesiology was super-informative in terms of thinking about how things should fit," Rotondo says. "I feel blessed that being at a public university like URI, rather than a fashion institute, allowed me to get a well-rounded education."

Rotondo also credits URI with affording him unique opportunities, such as his study-abroad experience in Florence, Italy, where he studied tailoring at Accademia Italia. "There, I learned about a tailored fit and the importance of the silhouette," he says.

"I am obsessed with the blending of the old with the new and the American ethic of things being built to last," Rotondo notes.

Rotondo's collection started with a pair of jeans he handmade for himself in 2015. "I was at a friend's house, and he asked where I got the jeans and would I make him a pair?" Rotondo recalls. "That ignited the process."

Rotondo's progress has been slow and steady—by design. He envisions career longevity of the type Ralph Lauren enjoys. Rotondo intends, one day, to oversee all aspects of production, from farm to factory, so as to stay true to his business model: handcrafted clothes made of sustainable materials in a manner that is both ethical and eco-friendly. Rotondo's also committed to donating 3% of his profits to charitable organizations.

And where did he learn to sew?

"My godmother, Sue Connolly, a schoolteacher, taught me, and my parents gave me the freedom to do whatever I wanted, to try new things and experiment, to learn what it was that I loved," Rotondo says. "Sometimes that means learning what you don't like. You need to have patience. And when you find what you do like, you go for it." •

—Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

RHODE TO A DEGREE

Favorite Professor:
Karl Aspelund, TMD associate professor and department chair. "His intellect and exploration of a topic were captivating. We now work together. I'm an advisory board member for the Class of 2030 curriculum overhaul."

Most Valuable Course:
"Distinguished University Professor of Business Administration Edward Mazze's entrepreneurship course was a gateway for seeing the possibilities of my degree and skillset. It sparked a fire in me to pursue my dreams."

Favorite Campus Space:
"The College of Pharmacy's medicinal garden is a gem—a tranquil spot for some peaceful time in between classes."

First Runway Gig:
Spring Splash, the TMD Fashion Show. "I had five outfits in the show. One piece was the first version of my RC001 jeans. Creating a collection and taking an idea from sketch to final product was cool. I won 'Most Marketable Collection.'"

Turning Point:
Realizing as a kinesiology major that what he really wanted was to design clothes that moved with the body.

Academic Career Highlight:
Studying tailoring in Florence, Italy.

Advice to Aspiring Entrepreneurs:
"Start small. Focus on quality over quantity."

URI Degree:
B.S., 2016, textiles, fashion merchandising and design.

PHOTO: TOMMY DUERR

World View

Incoming URI President Marc Parlange has spent his life working, exploring, and learning in every corner of the world. Born in Rhode Island, he's returning as URI's 12th president, with plans to challenge the state's brightest minds to tackle the world's biggest problems.

By Michael Blanding

As chair of the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering at Johns Hopkins University in the early 2000s, Marc Parlange joined a project to find sources of pollutants causing health issues in Baltimore. "Young people were having asthma and breathing problems, and I was really trying to understand the air quality and air movement around the city," he remembers about the massive effort sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency. Getting to the bottom of such a complex issue, he discovered, required many different types of experts, all working together. "You needed community leaders, environmental chemists, transportation engineers, and people like me—people working on the atmosphere," he says.

Parlange learned something else from the experience: The best collaborators on the project were both generous in sharing their own information, and open to hearing and learning from the experiences of others. "What I found is that good researchers really take the time to explain things to you, but at the same time, appreciate what you bring to the table," he says. After five years of work, the group produced a report that identified sources of specific fine particles in the air, including breathable dust with various toxins, along with detailed explanations for where they were coming from—vital information that could be used by government officials to prioritize cleanup efforts and dramatically improve child health.

The project was Parlange's first experience with the amplifying power of a truly multidisciplinary effort in tackling a big, seemingly intractable challenge—and he never forgot it. "The thing I really love about universities is that they are places of depth in many different fields," he says. "There are good people willing to roll up their sleeves, get together, and work on these tough problems." He has carried that lesson with him on an impressive university leadership career that's taken him all over the world—to Switzerland, British Columbia, and, most recently, Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, where he served as provost for the past four years.

This summer, he brings his experience and passion to Rhode Island, where he will become URI's new president. Parlange hopes to harness the University's depth of knowledge to tackle some big issues. "Rhode Island is a global leader in ocean and marine sciences," he says, acknowledging URI's existing partnerships in Indonesia. "But there are opportunities, for example, to partner with others in Australia and Southeast Asia—to build deeper networks of excellence that can deal with big challenges in fisheries, climate change, wind energy, and so forth," he says, speaking over a Zoom link from Australia before his move to Rhode Island. "You can do so much more if you have good friends in other countries."

In the course of an hourlong conversation, Parlange ticks off areas in which URI could make an impact. "Rhode Island is rightly focused on oceanography, business, science, and arts, but there are a lot of topical areas where the University could work across fields on top problems. How are we going to genuinely transform to a clean energy system? That is going to have technical problems, it's going to have social problems, it's going to have behavioral work," he says. "What are our cities going to look like in the future? What are our rural areas going to look like in the future? We're going to do some bold things."

As someone who has worked all over the world, he's excited to return to Rhode Island, where he was born, and which, he believes, has a global perspective that suits his personality. "As a state of immigrants, it's very welcoming of new ideas," he says. By using his ability to connect people across disciplines—and to connect Rhode Island to other institutions around the world—he aims to amplify those ideas, making URI even more attractive as a destination school for top students and faculty. "Dr. Parlange's global vision was developed during a lifetime of traveling the world and experiencing other cultures," says Margo Cook '86, chair of URI's Board of Trustees. "He is someone who can expand the University's global impact, as well as strengthen its commitment as a partner in the vitality and economic development of the state."

Parlange enjoying the great outdoors at Wilsons Promontory National Park in Victoria, Australia.

Parlange hopes to harness the University's depth of knowledge to tackle big issues.

A GLOBAL CAREER

Among the immigrants who've made Rhode Island home were Parlange's parents. In the 1950s, his father came to Rhode Island from France to study aerospace engineering at Brown University, while his mother came from Ireland to study at Bryant College (now Bryant University). "I can tell you exactly where they met in Providence—the corner of Power and Gano streets," says Parlange, whose great-aunt and great-uncle owned a triple-decker there, which they rented out to students. "They lived on different floors in the same house." When they married, they moved to France, where his father completed his Air Force service, and then to Connecticut, where Parlange grew up. Later, his parents relocated to Australia, where Parlange attended high school and university in Brisbane near the country's rugged Gold Coast. He developed a lifelong love of athletics. "I surfed in Queensland," he says of the famous home for world-class surfers. "That intimidates people—until they see me surf," he laughs.

Following in the footsteps of his engineer father, Parlange focused his scientific efforts on water—studying the relationship of turbulence and fluid mechanics to climate and agriculture. The field provided what was, for him, the perfect blend between scientific know-how and social impact. "Water is so basic to life," he says. "Environmental engineers have arguably saved more lives than all the medical professions put together. However, some one million people still die every year because of lack of access to clean drinking water."

He returned to the United States for graduate school at Cornell University. Both his master's advisor, Tammo Steenhuis, from the Netherlands, and his Ph.D. advisor, Wilfried Brutsaert, who is Belgian, had built decidedly global research teams. "Dr. Brutsaert had students from Japan, South America, and Africa," Parlange says. "He instilled in me the idea of being open to new ideas and approaches from students of all different backgrounds."

Parlange began his teaching career in 1990 at the University of California, Davis, before moving on to Johns Hopkins University in 1996. There, he was inspired by legendary dean of engineering Gordon "Reds" Wolman, whose father, Abel Wolman, developed the chlorination method that still ensures clean water in the United States. His son was equally passionate about using science for public good. "He was somebody who really believed that universities should interface with government and industry," Parlange says. At the same time, he says, Wolman lived by the maxim, "If something is worth doing, it's worth doing badly." In other words, don't be afraid to fail. "It means, let's not wait until things are perfect," says Parlange. "Let's start with the resources we have."

Parlange (back row, second from left) with some of his echohydrology research team in Burkina Faso. The research focused on the effects of climate change on agriculture in West Africa.

As department chair, Parlange found he, too, had a flair for leadership—bucking an institutional habit of holding meetings in conference rooms, and instead opening up his academic office as a place where students and assistant professors could come for guidance and connection. "It made me realize how University leadership is [important] in creating and cultivating an open environment," he says. During his tenure, Johns Hopkins launched a new major in environmental engineering, which became one of the top 10 programs in the country, according to the prestigious U.S. News and World Report rankings. "I've always enjoyed helping people motivate themselves, and supporting them to reach their potential," he says. "It sounds trite, but people want to be part of successful teams."

PHOTOS: COURTESY MARC AND MARY PARLANGE

"University leaders need to have been academics, need to have been teaching and advising students and seeing those students succeed. That empathetic part of a leader is important."

—*Marc Parlange*

Parlange (left) on Plaine Morte Glacier in Switzerland, where he conducted a number of field measurements of turbulence with his students. Parlange notes, "It was cold!"

Parlange's work caught the attention of Patrick Aebischer, a Swiss professor who worked at Brown University in the 1990s, and later served as president of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), one of Switzerland's two flagship technical universities. Aebischer was creating a new institute for environmental engineering and recruited Parlange as director in 2004. Aebischer had grand plans for the university, reenvisioning it as a global hub of innovation between academia and industry—years before such ideas became mainstream. "Now every single university around the world is talking about it, but Aebischer did this 20 years ago," Parlange says. "He wasn't building a technology park, he was building a vibrant oasis for ideas and translational research, one that would have the highest expectations for quality research, at the same time being strongly society-facing."

Aebischer's vision became reality, as he undertook a root-and-branch reform of how university departments communicated and opened up new lines of communication with government to work across the French- and German-speaking sides of the country. EPFL is now known as one of the world's top research universities, and a case study in how to do university transformation right. "I found it quite inspiring that could happen to an institution—that you don't have to stay locked in a certain position, but that you could get stronger," Parlange says. "How many people heard of EPFL 25 years ago? People often mispronounced it and got the letters mixed up. Now it's a clear global leader."

AN INCLUSIVE ATTITUDE

Parlange took those lessons to heart in his next position as dean of the faculty of applied science at the University of British Columbia, starting in 2013. There he led efforts to open two new innovation hubs, combining technology and entrepreneurship—now essential for any research university. At UBC, he also continued his own research, including a project in Burkina Faso that examined the effects of climate change and farming practices on the agriculture of West Africa—a topic for which he is now internationally known.

"With the Applied Science School of Community and Regional Planning, we established, together with the Musqueam First Nation community, the first master's program in Indigenous community planning. The graduates are in very high demand throughout British Columbia," he says, adding that he is excited to see similar conversations happening with First Nations communities in Rhode Island. He notes the recently announced plans for the relocation of Rhode Island's Tomaquag Museum—dedicated to educating the public about the history and culture of Rhode Island's Indigenous people—to URI land near the Kingston Campus.

Parlange continued his global focus as provost and senior vice president at Monash University, Australia's largest research university, starting in 2017. Based in Melbourne, Monash sprawls throughout the Pacific and Indian oceans, with campuses in Malaysia, China, Italy, and India, where graduate students split their time while conducting an international research project as part of a joint Ph.D. program with the top-ranked Indian Institute of Technology Bombay. Having that kind of global reach is the only way that an institution can truly work on problems of climate change or international security that affect the entire world, argues Parlange, who hopes to expand similar global relationships at URI. "These are the deep, deep partnerships we could build," he says.

PHOTOS: COURTESY MARC AND MARY PARLANGE

At Monash, Parlange helped to spur some ambitious projects in areas such as antimicrobial resistance, AI and data science, new-generation building construction approaches, and better governance and policy. A new research endeavor in sustainability will examine the effects of climate change in Antarctica, some 2,000 miles across the Southern Ocean. The project involves multiple departments at the university, as well as a dozen other Australian universities and government agencies.

This past year, Parlange led another effort called the Melbourne Experiment, which examined all aspects of the city during the coronavirus pandemic, from air quality to the livelihood of street musicians. "We wanted to monitor and understand what happens when you shut down a city for an extended period of time," says Parlange, who hosted up to 200 people every Friday for a Zoom meeting featuring speakers and discussion on the topic.

Parlange at the finish of the Sierre-Zinal, a 31K mountain race in the Swiss Alps. At Monash, Parlange was known for running to and from work. When asked if he will still run at URI, Parlange replied, "I will run for sure. But hopefully at noon, instead of with a headlamp in the morning and at night!" He added, "I'll always be a runner!"

"We had Ph.D. students and undergraduates, faculty, deans, professional staff, alumni, government, industry," he says. For more than a year, the sessions became a launching point for numerous research projects, including a study on the livability of the suburbs, an examination of racism toward Indigenous people, and a collaboration between public health, arts, and law faculty on domestic violence. Ironically, Parlange says, the venture became a way to deeply connect faculty members who had never met each other on campus, and pool knowledge and resources to examine issues that could have a long-term impact on urban planning and global sustainability goals. "It goes back to what I learned in Baltimore about respect, openness, sharing, and generosity," Parlange says.

AN EXPANSIVE VISION

Members of the URI presidential search committee were enthusiastic about Parlange's wide-ranging talents. "He is an accomplished, visionary leader who has focused on student success and experience," said committee chair and URI trustee Thomas M. Ryan '75, Hon. '99. "We found a champion for all faculty, staff, and students—a president who can lead the University toward another transformational decade."

When he arrives in Kingston this summer, Parlange is hoping to build on URI's initiatives to connect people across disciplines. He cites URI's Signature International Programs, in which students embed themselves in language study while pursuing a dual major in another field—engineering and German, for example. Or computer science and Chinese, or fashion design and Italian. URI's International Engineering Program, the first of URI's Signature International Programs, was groundbreaking and has long served as a model for other institutions in the United States. "It was a bold initiative that was really followed through, and that is extremely important," he says.

He believes that his longtime experience as both a professor and an administrator will help him make connections with faculty and students to push through similarly bold initiatives. "I know what it is to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning to refresh what I'm going to say in an 8 o'clock lecture, or what it's like to have worked for weeks on a proposal and be told there's not enough money, so you're not funded this year," he says. "I think university leaders need to have been academics, need to have been teaching and advising students and seeing those students succeed. That empathetic part of a leader is important."

He's also looking forward to becoming part of the campus community. An avid sports enthusiast, he and his wife recently became fans of the St. Kilda Football Club (Saints), a Melbourne-based Australian-rules football team. "We are in a city where that's their unbelievable passion, and I've joined the Saints club," he says, holding up a St. Kilda cellphone case. "It's an incredible sport—it's just creative chaos." He's eager now to cheer on the relatively more orderly—but no less exciting—URI basketball teams—particularly the women's team, where six of the 12 players on the roster last year and the associate head coach are French. "I'm excited to meet them—and to wear a shirt that says URI Basketball," he says.

Parlange also plans to stay active at URI through biking, hiking, trail running, and sea kayaking. One habit he'll have to give up is running five miles back and forth between his home and his office at Monash each day—since the president's house at URI is right in the middle of campus. "I tell everybody that I will live 100 meters from my office, so I now can run in the daylight with students, staff, and faculty," enthuses Parlange, who wouldn't have it any other way.

Being at the center of the action, connecting the people around him, and helping spur them to achieve big plans, is exactly where he likes to be. "Every morning, I've been receiving the most fantastic emails from people at URI—with ideas, with energy, with enthusiasm—and they are ready to teach me about what they are doing," he beams. "I hope those emails never stop." •

The Justice *of* League Education

At URI, Domingo Morel ’98, Soljane Martinez ’98, Tammy Warner ’99, M.S. ’06, and Matthew Buchanan ’98, —all first-generation college students from underrepresented communities—became friends. None planned to be educators. But they all found themselves drawn to education, finding there a sense of purpose and a cause—the fight for equity and social justice—that needed their particular superpowers.

By Soljane Martinez ’98

PHOTO: NORA LEWIS

In the fall of 2019, a Brown University forum brought together a group of Rhode Island equity advocates, educators, and leaders to examine the shortage of teachers of color in the state.

Among the panelists and guests were three of my friends, all URI alumni, and myself. As tends to be the case in Rhode Island—and at URI—circles of friends often overlap and we all came to be friends through our involvement in campus organizations.

Reuniting at this moment in time at a forum like this, I was struck by the fact that, although none of us had studied education at URI, we had all ended up with successful careers in education and we were all wholeheartedly dedicated to improving the educational system and developing equity and social justice within it.

Before URI, we'd each battled racism, poverty, and low expectations. At URI, we learned the power of advocacy—a power we've since wielded within education, each in our own way.

High School Principal Matt Buchanan's Superpower: CONVICTION

Buchanan believes all students can learn and aims to help educators understand the best way to help them.

In 1994, Providence native Matt Buchanan '98 received an envelope from URI—a letter of congratulations from the Talent Development (TD) program. "I cried. That was the first time I really felt like college was for me," says Buchanan, now principal of Hope High School, on Providence's East Side.

"I didn't really begin to think about college until my senior year. I was recruited by Gerald Williams and Brian Scott from Educational Talent Search," a program that identifies potential college students from disadvantaged backgrounds and helps them succeed in higher education. "It was history from there. I can't thank those two men enough for believing in me and assisting me in the entire college process," says Buchanan.

"I arrived at URI in the summer of 1994 as a broke Black kid from the projects—unprepared academically, financially, and socially for college." Friends and the TD program—which helps recruit and retain Rhode Island students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the majority of whom are students of color—got him through that first summer and the subsequent four years.

> "A lot of educators don't believe our students can learn, and that is a huge problem."
>
> —Matt Buchanan

"We made a pact to make sure we successfully finished the summer program, and we supported each other. Three out of four of us 'made it' through the summer. We were roommates. My friends allowed me to be myself, and we were there for each other. They were my ultimate rock."

Buchanan intended to major in education, but his plans changed. "I had taken a human development and family studies (HDF) class during the summer and loved it, so I switched my major. I also took an Africana studies class and loved that, as well. I learned through my TD advisor that I could minor in Africana studies."

TD proved to be Buchanan's biggest support system at URI. "TD was—and is—a family to me. They believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. They made sure I was ready for life after college. Because of TD, I had the best college experience ever," he says proudly.

URI provided other opportunities for Buchanan: "I was a four-year member of Uhuru SaSa (Freedom Now) and that was amazing," he says of URI's first and oldest multicultural organization, established in 1972.

Buchanan has many vivid memories of URI, but two days stand out:

- June 21, 1997: "On the way to a Beach Boys concert, I met my wife, Diana Figueroa '02, who was a freshman. Here we are 24 years later, married for 18 years with three beautiful children."
- May 17, 1998: "My graduation from URI. The look on my family's faces, especially my mom, is something I will never, ever forget."

"Without their unwavering support and dedication, there's no way in hell I would be where I am," says Buchanan. "My experience on that campus provided a sense of belonging. Those were by far the best four years of my life."

Twenty-three years later, Buchanan's journey has taken him on a road as winding and unpredictable as state Route 138.

After URI, Buchanan held myriad jobs in education, including: guidance counselor, financial aid counselor, director of programming for foster children, and advisor and college counselor at The Met High School. He even returned to TD as a tutor for five years. In 2014, he became vice principal of Nathanael Greene Middle School in Providence.

Buchanan—who most recently served as principal of Hope High School in Providence and will serve as the principal of Somerville High School in Massachusetts, beginning this summer—has always been focused on equity and "empowering white educators to fully embrace our Black and Brown students and all that comes with them, and empowering students to advocate for themselves," he says.

> "I do not believe that our politics and education systems are designed to provide positive educational experiences for students of color."
>
> —Domingo Morel

"Education is critical to the success of our Black and Brown students. Too many white educators come at our students from a sympathetic—as opposed to empathetic—standpoint. Our kids need the mindset of educators to change. A lot of educators don't believe our students can learn, and that is a huge problem," says Buchanan, who considers himself to be "tough but understanding," because of his shared experiences with his students.

He also acknowledges his role as a parent. "I am fully engaged in my children's education," Buchanan says. "I communicate my expectations with my children and also with their teachers. I know what questions to ask, how to advocate for my children, and I have the ability to hold educators accountable."

As a parent and an educator, Buchanan hopes to have a long-term impact on the education of young people. "I hope my legacy is doing what's best for students—using data to make decisions that serve our students and families," he says. "I want my legacy to be that I have done whatever it takes to guide these students to greatness."

Buchanan holds an M.Ed. in educational leadership from Rhode Island College.

Professor Domingo Morel's Superpower: INSIGHT

Morel sees, helps others understand, and works to improve the educational and political systems that discourage students of color.

One of the friends Buchanan counted on at URI was Domingo Morel '98.

Their paths crossed at Central High School, when Morel's family relocated from New Jersey to Rhode Island the summer before his senior year. "Although I knew that I wanted to go to college," Morel says, "as a first-generation college student, I had no idea what the admissions process looked like or if I met admissions requirements."

Like Buchanan, Morel, a native of the Dominican Republic, also credits Gerald Williams with helping him immensely. "During the early part of my senior year, in his position with ETS, he registered me for the SATs, which I had not taken, and eventually helped me apply to several colleges, including URI—through the TD program," says Morel. In 1996, Williams became an academic advisor for TD. He became the director of the program in 2000 and still serves in that role.

Morel, who is now an associate professor of political science at Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey, admits he was not a stellar student during his early years.

"I always received average grades and I felt misunderstood by my teachers. I remember my teachers constantly focusing on behavior concerns, although I never demonstrated behavioral issues," Morel recalls. In fact, he cannot recall one teacher who he feels recognized his potential.

PHOTOS: NORA LEWIS

"It was always frustrating to me. I felt that my teachers did not view me and my friends as intelligent and capable of going to college," says Morel, who is Black and Latinx. He says he experienced "culture shock" when he began at URI in 1994.

"It was my first time attending classes and living in a community where people of color were not in the majority. Eventually, my roommates and I adjusted and made friendships that help sustain me today," Morel says.

Like Buchanan, Morel changed majors early. "I initially wanted to study marine biology," he says. "But it only took one class for me to realize that it was not what I really wanted. I decided on HDF because I wanted to do something related to counseling." He, too, credits TD for providing "the greatest source of support and mentorship."

Morel planned to attend Howard University to pursue a master's degree in social work after URI, but financial constraints changed that plan. He joined the admissions team at Rhode Island College for four years before returning to TD, this time as an academic advisor and recruiter, where he stayed for the next seven years.

During that time, Morel became involved in a number of community organizations, including Latino Dollars for Scholars. He also co-founded the Latino Policy Institute, which stimulates public policy discourse by examining and communicating the Latino experience in Rhode Island "We helped get in-state tuition for undocumented students attending the state institutions of higher education in Rhode Island and published a report on the state of education for Latinos in Rhode Island," he shares proudly.

Morel completed his Ph.D. in political science at Brown, and in 2016, he joined the political science faculty at Rutgers.

Morel, who met his wife, Lisa Abreau '01, when they were both students at URI, has two daughters. Did his views on education change when he became a parent? "I don't know that they have changed," he says. "However, my daughters are not growing up in poverty, as I did, and they attend a public school system with the resources to provide its students with a positive and rewarding education experience. Seeing how their educational experience is vastly different from mine—and from that of so many others who live in low-resourced communities—inspires me to continue my work."

"I do not believe that our politics and education systems are designed to provide positive educational experiences for students of color in our country and in Rhode Island," says Morel, who served as a local member of the Johns Hopkins team responsible for the 2018 report on the Providence Public School District, which prompted the state of Rhode Island to take over the school district in 2019—a takeover he opposed.

Despite the current state of education, nationally and locally, Morel maintains a positive outlook. "I think our greatest power is the ability to bring people together to address the challenges our communities experience," he says. "My wish is that we would be able to do more of that."

Morel holds an M.A. in counseling from Rhode Island College, an M.A. in political science from Brown, and a Ph.D. in political science from Brown. He is the author of Takeover: Race, Education, and American Democracy, *which examines the implications of state takeovers of school districts in racialized communities.*

Commissioner Tammy Warner's Superpower: OPTIMISM

Warner's personal educational experience gives her a unique perspective and fuels her belief that education can change lives.

College was not an option for Tammy Vargas Warner '99, M.S. '06; it was an expectation.

"My parents drilled this into me and my brothers as we were growing up. As the oldest, it was almost my duty to be the first in the family to go to college and become 'someone great.' It was a lot of pressure. However, in all honesty, it was as much my dream as it was theirs," says Warner, the assistant commissioner of postsecondary education for the state of Rhode Island.

Warner—who, like Morel, was born in the Dominican Republic—witnessed, recognizes, and appreciates the long-lasting sacrifice her parents—both professionals in their home country—had to make when they moved their family to Rhode Island in 1984 to escape political turmoil, and began working in the factory assembly lines for minimum wage.

"I knew that I could not let them down," says Warner. She enjoyed learning, attending primarily majority-minority schools throughout K–12 in Providence. While there were a few positive experiences, "most of them were negative," she says.

"I was always a good student. But I was teased for being the 'teacher's pet' and I struggled socially. I became a cheerleader in high school to be more social, to try to fit in. It was enough to get by," she recounts.

When it was time to decide where to go to college, Warner, who was accepted to four of the five schools where she'd applied, chose URI—the only in-state school. "I chose to attend URI," she says, "because I knew that I would be part of a caring and supportive community through TD."

"My dream was to become a pediatrician. During my first semester, I learned about the nursing program and it sounded like a more appealing path," says Warner.

By the end of her first year, she learned she was pregnant.

"My passion for college and for learning did not change when I found out I was going to become a mom—actually it deepened my commitment to my education and gave me even more of an incentive to become a college graduate," Warner says.

TD was a source of support, but that wasn't the case everywhere. "It was as if some faculty were ready to write me off. One instructor told me that they were surprised I was still 'trying to do this.' They figured I would just leave school and get married. I remember that day like it was yesterday. It still hurts to think about how close I came to giving up when I saw that was what others expected," Warner recounts.

Still a full-time student taking general education requirements, but now with a newborn son, one of Warner's classes was developmental psychology—in the human development and family studies program. "There were days that I had to take my son to class. The instructors were so understanding, encouraging, and supportive," she says. "They didn't mind that I brought my son, and, in fact, were happy to have him showcase some of the concepts and theories we were learning. I decided to change my major and study within that supportive environment, rather than have to fight to prove my worth at every step."

Warner also found support through involvement in the Latin American Student Association and time spent at the Multicultural Center (now the Multicultural Student Services Center).

By the time she graduated, Warner was a mother to a toddler, attending URI's Providence Campus full time at night while working full time during the day. "It took me a bit longer to finish, but it was worth it. I was incredibly proud of what I accomplished and the future that I was creating for myself and my son," she says. "I thought I would start my career with my diploma in early childhood development in hand."

It turned out that the customer service job she'd held for about a year before graduating would become a career. Her boss offered her a raise and offered to pay for graduate classes if she wanted to pursue an M.B.A. It was an opportunity she could not pass up.

PHOTO: NORA LEWIS

Four years later, in 2003, Warner was overseeing human resources in a small, local textile firm while taking business courses part time. "I thought I had everything I wanted, but found myself wondering if I had settled," she says.

A friend working as an academic advisor at the Community College of Rhode Island encouraged Warner to apply for an advisor position. She did. She was hired and soon began researching related graduate programs.

"I loved the new job," says Warner. "It was incredibly fulfilling to work with adult students. I found that I could relate to many of these students—students of color, single parents with small children, working professionals—all looking to improve themselves in order to improve the lives of their families."

> "My work is fueled by my optimism in humankind, in our ability to respect and accept each other's differences … [and] work collectively for the betterment of our entire society."
>
> —*Tammy Warner*

Warner quickly realized she wanted to work in higher education. She enrolled in the college student personnel master's degree program at URI the following year, where, after serving in advising roles at CCRI and URI, and in an academic program director role at URI, she served as assistant dean from 2016–2020.

Warner's unique educational journey fuels her belief that education is the great equalizer, affording individuals access to upward mobility, financial stability, and improved health—for themselves and future generations.

Her firstborn, now 26, served as inspiration for her dissertation on college access. He decided early on that college wasn't for him, which came as a surprise to Warner. She later learned that negative classroom interactions had created academic self-doubt and anxiety in her son.

"It was the same story I had heard countless times from students of color I'd encountered in higher education," says Warner.

When she learned that her son shared those experiences, it became personal. It was the push Warner needed to dive deeper into researching a more complex phenomenon: racial microaggressions in the classroom environment.

"It is not something humans are born with," Warner explains. "Rather, it is a behavior, a mindset that is learned and reinforced in a variety of systemic ways."

"My work has only just begun," says Warner, who is now Rhode Island's assistant commissioner for postsecondary academic and student affairs. "My work is fueled by my optimism in humankind, in our ability as a people to someday learn to appreciate our individual strengths, respect and accept each other's differences, lean on our similarities to build community, craft shared goals, and work collectively for the betterment of our entire society. I think my belief in people is part of my legacy."

Warner holds an M.S. in college student personnel from URI and a Ph.D. in higher education administration from University of Massachusetts, Boston.

And My Superpower: FORESIGHT

I see a future in which all students have the support, skills, and tools to have a positive and successful educational experience.

My mother is a high school graduate, my father earned his GED by taking night classes when I was a baby, juggling his blue-collar job and young family. My parents raised me and my sister with a simple mantra: "Education is the key that will open any door of opportunity."

In our home, like Tammy's, it was expected we would attend college.

I spoke only Spanish until I began kindergarten. I quickly mastered English and excelled academically. Despite moving quite a bit, including to Puerto Rico during middle school, I maintained a college-track attitude.

I was 6 when I decided I wanted to be a surgeon in the U.S. Navy. Then I discovered I wasn't a big fan of swimming. Language and writing came naturally, so I chose another career: news anchorwoman. I would attend college with this goal in mind.

In 1993, I attended a college fair in New York City. There were three people manning a URI table—Victor Capellan '92, M.S. '96, M.A. '02; Henry Remolina '93; and Henry Ponciano '97, M.S. '11. I stopped to inquire about journalism programs. That moment sealed my college fate—and those three people became lifelong friends to me.

After a visit to campus I knew URI was where I wanted to be. It also seemed far enough from home to allow me to come out from under a strict upbringing. Back then, Rhode Island seemed a world away from New York City.

URI provided support in some unexpected ways. For instance, admission officer Frank Santos Jr., who called my home after reading my admission application, became my "URI dad." One of my first stops when I arrived on campus was to meet him. I ended up landing a work-study job in the Office of Admission with Santos.

His care and encouragement kept me at URI when the challenge of going from city girl to rural college girl seemed too much. I missed the hustle and bustle of the city and hopping on a subway at any time of day or night. At URI, I was without a car and felt alone.

I joined clubs and met people who have become family in the 27 years since. I became a tour guide, a student senator, president of the Latin American Student Association, and eventually the editor-in-chief of *The Good 5 Cent Cigar.*

And I did something I swore I'd never do—I pledged a sorority.

Sigma Lambda Upsilon/Señoritas Latinas Unidas Sorority Inc. was not your typical pledge experience. The culturally based national organization was the perfect mix of philanthropy and discipline—best described as Girl Scouts meets military.

We wore uniforms, walked in formation, and practiced social probation—no partying or hanging out in between classes. It was all business: academics and community service. We were still new on campus, and many at URI weren't ready to see a group of women exhibiting such discipline. We endured nasty comments and harassment.

The women who became my *hermanas* (sisters) have been there for me for everything—weddings, funerals, births, educational growth, and career promotions.

URI was a transformational time in my life. Like Princess Diana of Themyscira—Wonder Woman—I had to blend into society outside of my homeland. I acclimated to new people, customs, and traditions, and learned skills that have served as my arsenal over the decades.

While I didn't become a news anchorwoman, I became a journalist on a different track—print. I landed a job at *The Providence Journal* straight out of URI before heading back to *my* Themyscira, New York City, as a personal finance reporter for

PHOTO: NORA LEWIS

> "All students should have the chance to receive the best educational services, resources, and opportunities—regardless of zip code or skin color."
>
> —*Soljane Martinez*

The Wall Street Journal in 2000. A year later I changed tracks again.

I was accepted to the New York City Teaching Fellows Program, which called upon people in diverse careers to bring their skills into the highest-need schools in the city. I simultaneously earned my master's in education while teaching third and fourth grade in Brooklyn, the same borough in which I'd attended high school.

Just four months prior, I'd left *The Wall Street Journal* to pursue my master's and begin teaching. Our offices were located on floor 11 of One World Financial Center—ground zero.

The pain of 9/11 was too much. I decided New York City was not where I wanted to raise children once I had them. I completed my master's and looked to Rhode Island to put down roots.

In 2003, I joined a young charter school in Providence: Highlander, where teachers, students, and parents were a team, a family. I stayed 15 years, almost giving birth to my youngest in the school's halls.

I honed my teaching craft, reconnected with URI friends, and built networks, evolving as an educator and social justice advocate. I specialized in World War II, genocide, and Holocaust studies—a passion inspired by a course taught by Professor Robert Weisbord at URI. In 2014, I was selected as one of 25 teachers from around the world to travel to Poland to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, an experience that changed my perspective on life.

After many years teaching, I wanted to impact students beyond the classroom. That led me to the Principal Residency Network, which prepares aspiring leaders to champion educational equity and innovation to improve student achievement. As if that wasn't enough, I concurrently enrolled in Johnson & Wales' Educational Leadership doctoral program.

From 2016–2020, I committed myself to my doctoral work. While completing my doctorate, I was a classroom teacher, a dean of culture and students, and an elementary school principal, finally starting my own educational consulting business. On Friday, March 13, 2020 (as if that isn't enough of a dance with superstition), I successfully defended my dissertation, hours before the state, and essentially the world, shut down operations due to COVID-19.

Currently, I'm the education coordinator at the Annenberg Institute, where I coordinate Brown University's K–12 engagement programs, facilitating partnerships aiming for equitable opportunities for Rhode Island's underserved students.

My URI education has been the catalyst that has sparked every professional opportunity I've had. It has allowed me to serve students, families, and entire communities. I hope that the legacy I leave behind for my children—and for all children—is one of transformation, equity, and opportunity. All students should have the chance to receive the best educational services, resources, and opportunities—regardless of zip code or skin color.

Martinez holds an M.Ed from CUNY, College of Staten Island, and an Ed.D. in educational leadership from Johnson & Wales.

I'm proud to be part of this incredible group of educators. We were brought together at URI, where our shared commitment to transforming education and our successful careers were launched.

Individually, the work we do has enabled us to impact the entire education spectrum—from K–12 to academia, and from policy to practice. A principal inspiring young adults, a commissioner overseeing academic program quality for Rhode Island's postsecondary education, a faculty member bringing to light a failing system and providing a framework for improvement, and an education coordinator helping bridge the needs of districts with the resources of higher education.

Fueled by conviction, insight, optimism, and foresight—and by our collective faith in the power of education—my fellow educators and I stand united and firm in our beliefs and actions: We will always fight to conquer the injustices of inequitable education. •

Cadet Charles Dumas ’21 cheers on cadet Aaliyah Thomas ’24 as she works to climb over a wall during field training exercises on Cape Cod in March.

PHOTO: GRACE KELLY

LEADERS IN THE MAKING

URI’s ROTC program has launched the careers of many accomplished military personnel, including a four-star general. The cadets of the Cramer’s Sabers Battalion learn to push themselves, work together, cheer each other on, and become effective leaders.

By Grace Kelly

A sophomore who was the first female football player on her high school team. A senior who loves to cook chicken piccata and dreams of flying helicopters. A lieutenant colonel returning to his alma mater to lead the next generation of Army officers in their training.

They’re all a part of the University of Rhode Island’s Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program, and on this particular Friday morning, they’re all working together to get over a wall.

“Beat the wall! Beat the wall!” a group of camouflage-clad cadets chants as one attempts to scramble over a slanted wooden wall structure planted in sand.

It’s a cold but bright day at a field training exercise (FTX) event at Joint Base Cape Cod in Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts, and a bitter wind chafes the slivers of exposed faces peeking out from behind the cadets’ face masks.

The cadet climbing the wall, Aaliyah Thomas ’24, gets one leg up, hooking her foot over the top, and struggles to lift her body over the horizontal edge.

“You got it!” “There you go!” her compatriots shout in encouragement as Thomas finally makes it over the edge. Cheers erupt, and another cadet’s voice breaks in over the din, “Can I go again?”

A short walk away, cadets from URI, Salve Regina University, Roger Williams University, and a visiting group from Providence College, work together to accomplish a series of tasks in a roofless complex.

“They have to get the cadets across those two planks of wood and bring that box with them, then disassemble everything, all without touching any of the red,” says Lt. Col. Cornelius “Tad” Granai ’00, URI professor of military science. In front of him, two cadets sit on the planks, which wobble on the suspended bars they rest on.

“Touch red, you’re dead,” Granai explains, gesturing to the painted red metal.

He is being figurative, of course—nobody is going to die from touching a metal pole that’s been painted red. But maneuvering the group through the obstacles to accomplish the designated task is essential training for these young cadets, many of whom will go on to commission as second lieutenants upon graduation, and possibly move through the ranks beyond that.

Lt. Col. Granai walks over the icy wooden platform to observe another group that’s attempting to get everyone over a large wall.

“When I was here at URI, I actually played club hockey and they still have the same coach, Coach Augustine,” Granai says, laughing. “And it’s been a dream come true returning to my alma mater.”

Lt. Col. Cornelius "Tad" Granai '00, URI professor of military science (center right, in black cap and mask) talks with ROTC cadets during field training exercises.

Granai's role as professor of military science, a position he took over last summer from Lt. Col. Brian Mehan, means that he is in charge of the ROTC program (URI's program also includes students from Roger Williams University and Salve Regina University). On a more granular level, it also means recruiting and retaining top cadet talent, managing the other military personnel in the program (known as the cadre), teaching training courses, and helping make each cadet the best leader they can be.

"Our goal is to produce second lieutenants for the Army, whether they're Army Reserve, National Guard, or active duty. We have a responsibility to commission 15 cadets," Granai says. "But it's really more than just the quantitative goal. It's also about the quality of those cadets."

There is a long list of accomplished military personnel who have sprung from the rank-and-file ROTC battalions at URI.

"We have a four-star general, we have a couple three-star generals, a few two-stars, one-stars, a whole bunch of us colonels," says retired Col. John Petrella '68. Petrella is president of the URI Army ROTC Alumni Chapter and attended URI back when two years of military service was a requirement.

"URI was always my school of choice. I'm a Rhode Islander," Petrella says. "And I joined ROTC my freshman year. Well, it was mandatory at the time, but I just really liked it and committed to stay."

Petrella graduated in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in accounting and became a second lieutenant of infantry for the Army. He attributes a lot of his successes in life to ROTC and being in the Army, and as president of the ROTC Alumni Chapter, has seen the quality leaders the program produces.

"I found having the military background and responsibilities useful as I went through my civilian career. I was with the Treasury Department—eventually became a senior executive—and I think that was a direct result of my military background," says Petrella. "I always feel that students in ROTC have a leg up on their contemporaries. Not only have they gone through the academic exercise of college, they've also had the opportunity to grow as young leaders, and have responsibilities and challenges that their classmates who aren't in ROTC maybe don't have."

Col. John Petrella '68 is president of URI's Army ROTC Alumni Chapter.

THE PROGRAM'S LINEAGE HAS roots that go deep, and the story of URI as a land grant college is directly linked to the first ROTC-like program at the school. In fact, you could say that ROTC is as much a part of the University's history as Rhody the Ram and Keaney Gymnasium—the cadets' home base for training.

The University of Rhode Island was originally created through the Morrill Act, also known as the Land Grant Act of 1862, which provided grants of land for states to create universities specializing in agricultural and mechanical arts. But the act also included a provision for the teaching of military science, stating that the purpose "shall be, without excluding scientific or classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning ... to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes, in the several pursuits and professions in life."

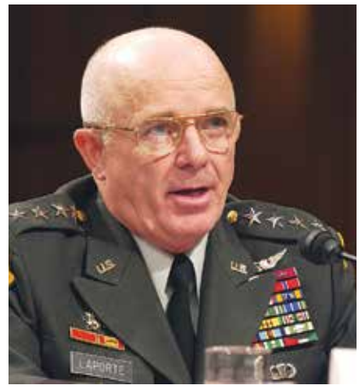
In 1894, URI, then called the Rhode Island College of Agricultural and Mechanic Arts, got its first professor of military science, then known as professor of science and tactics: Capt. William Wallace Witherspoon.

During Witherspoon's tenure, Lippitt Hall, an armory and drill hall, was constructed and the Rhode Island Corps of Cadets started drilling on the future home of the Quadrangle.

Since those nascent days, the University's ROTC program has grown to encompass cadets with a variety of backgrounds and accomplishments, and many of their names and stories can be found in an interactive Hall of Fame in the Memorial Union.

There is Pvt. Robert "Bob" H. Barker, a World War I veteran who fought and died in the trenches in France, and who wrote his father about joining the infantry in 1918, saying, "Someone in the family ought to do their bit, and that bit should be a mighty big piece."

Company D cadets engaged in training exercises on URI's Kingston Campus Quadrangle, circa 1927. Teaching military tactics was part of the early mission of land grant colleges like URI.



Four-star Gen. Leon LaPorte '68 is URI's highest-ranking graduate.

Then, there's Lt. Gen. John B. Blount '50, whose mom was a cook in a URI dining hall and whose father ran the Ram's Den, a sandwich shop on Upper College Road. Blount went on to serve in both Korea and Vietnam, and played a pivotal role in "Operation Pegasus," which broke the siege of the Marine base at Khe Sanh in Vietnam.

AND YOU CAN'T MENTION THE URI ROTC program without noting its highest-ranking graduate, four-star Gen. Leon LaPorte '68. Today Gen. LaPorte lives outside of San Antonio, Texas, but he's a Rhode Islander through and through. He grew up in Olneyville, where he ate New York System wieners piled high with meat sauce and chopped onions, and attended George West Junior High School, where he met his wife, Judy.

"The only thing famous out of Olneyville is the New York System wiener," LaPorte cracks. "When my wife and I go back, we always go to Olneyville and have a wiener. It's part of our tradition."

After graduating from Mount Pleasant High School, LaPorte enrolled at URI in 1964, where he studied secondary education."My plan was to be a high school biology teacher and a baseball coach," he says. "And I didn't do either of those things."

Like Petrella, he joined ROTC because it was mandatory, but came to love it.

"My dad was in the Rhode Island National Guard after WWII, but we weren't a big military family," LaPorte says. "So I knew very little about the Army, but I liked ROTC, and I think what attracted me to staying in it was that I was going to be a part of something bigger than myself."

After graduating, LaPorte left the quiet village of Kingston to start a military career that would take him around the world. "I graduated from URI on a Saturday, and on Sunday, Judy and I packed up all our belongings in one car and left to be in the Army—and we were in the Army for 38 years," he says.

He rose to the rank of four-star general, the highest rank achievable in the Army, commanded the 1st Cavalry Division and the 3rd Armored Corps, and from 2002 to 2006 was commander of the United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and the United States Forces in Korea.

While his military career took him from Kingston to Vietnam, to Germany and to various bases in the United States and Korea, he still remembers his time at URI and how it shaped who he became.

PHOTOS: GRACE KELLY; COURTESY JOHN PETRELLA; COURTESY URI SPECIAL COLLECTIONS; WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

In addition to field training events, like this one on Cape Cod, some cadets (those with scholarships who contract to serve with the Army) do physical training at 6 a.m. three times a week when school is in session.

"I think URI has done some really great things," LaPorte says. "I love going back to the campus, and I always tell my wife, 'I love walking across the Quadrangle knowing that I have no requirements, no exams, I don't have a paper due.'" He laughs. "I can get a cup of coffee and go sit on a bench and not worry about anything. It's the best feeling."

FAST-FORWARD TO TODAY, AND the spirits of those who walked the Quad, laughed with friends, loved their families, and fought battles for their country live on in the newest ROTC recruits.

First-year cadet Madison Wuttke '24 bursts with excitement during FTX training, her helmet slightly askew but her smile wide when she takes off her mask for a sip of water.

Wuttke, who is double majoring in global business and French and is part of the National Guard, joined ROTC largely because of scholarship opportunities, and was surprised how much she enjoyed it.

"ROTC was appealing because I could have a normal college experience while being in the military and getting my degree," Wuttke says. "It's not like going to West Point or a military academy, where your whole life is military; it just makes up a small portion of my life here, whereas it'll make up a bigger portion of it when I graduate."

As part of the newest group of cadets, Wuttke has felt welcomed by older peers and has been inspired by their leadership. "Our seniors kind of end up leading everyone else in the battalion," she says. "When we run things like this FTX, that's all organized and put together by the seniors. So the cadre is giving them the opportunity to lead an entire battalion."

One of those seniors is cadet Charles "Charlie" Dumas '21, a mechanical engineering major.

On this cold day on Cape Cod, the towering, 6-foot-9 Dumas is one of the loudest of those cheering for cadet Thomas as she scrambles over the inclined wall. He sees encouraging his fellow cadets and helping them succeed as a key part of becoming a leader in the military, and in life.

"There's a different set of rules and a mindset that, as a good leader and role model, you're expected to hold yourself to. You have to make sure that you do, because people see and look up to you," Dumas says. "So you have to be ready to go at all times."

Part of the reason why Dumas, who is from Hopkinton, Massachusetts, decided to join the ROTC program at URI is because of his experience at an Army-sponsored program called Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science, or GEMS.

Cadet Madison Wuttke '24

Cadet Charles Dumas '21

PHOTOS: GRACE KELLY

Cadets from URI, Salve Regina University, Roger Williams University, and Providence College gather for a lunch break at the Cape Cod field training event in March.

"It was, frankly, a sort of nerd camp for middle school kids," Dumas says, laughing. He fell in love with how they taught STEM and saw how much the military contributed to the fields.

"That camp showed me all the opportunities in STEM that are available in the Army," Dumas says. "Eighty to 90% of the people there were civilians, but they had access to government and Army-funded technology and projects. It was really cool, and I decided to join ROTC so I could have that Army background and apply my engineering interest to that."

After graduating, Dumas hopes to join the aviation branch and fly helicopters, for which he shares a passion with his dad. "Since I was little, I was flying RC helicopters," he says. "And my dad just loves helicopters. If he hears one, this man will pull the car over and look up into the sky."

Dumas hopes, one day, to be in one of those helicopters his dad pulls over to see.

But beyond ROTC as a means of building a future in engineering and fulfilling a familial dream of flying, Dumas has come to love the program, in a large part because of the support the cadets give each other.

Thinking back on the recent FTX training session on the Cape, Dumas says he was so impressed by the effort his contemporaries put forward. "It was super impressive being there and seeing everyone work together to get their tasks done. It was really cool even to simply see that inclined wall, and sometimes you get these really short cadets and they would just look at it like it was impossible," he says. "But then, when you're yelling and cheering and helping them, and they just drive through and get it—it's just such a little thing, but it's also a big thing."

Cadets work together to "beat the wall" during field training exercises, where there's an emphasis on teamwork.

FOR ROTC ALUMNI, SEEING THE newest generation of cadets, like Dumas, graduate and commission is like stepping into the past; it reminds them of their own journeys and how integral ROTC was to their success.

"It's extremely rewarding every year to sit there in the front row as we commission all these young second lieutenants. The first thing I always say to my classmate beside me is, 'Did we look that young?'" says Petrella, laughing. "I look back now and I have lifelong friendships with people I've served with. We stay very close, because when you're in a foxhole with somebody, you get to know him pretty well."

LaPorte adds, "We like seeing the young cadets, and we realize that we are role models for these young men and women. If they see us and talk to us and we share our thoughts with them, we are just building a better community at URI and a better ROTC program."

For Jeannette Riley, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, which houses URI's military science program, ROTC is a perfect example of what the University in its entirety aims to do: Produce strong leaders who go on to make a difference in the world.

"The team that leads the ROTC is very focused on developing the next generation of leaders for the Army. They run a very strong, rigorous program that ensures the cadets are successful in their academic programs, as well as in the demanding physical training required. They also collaborate with other ROTC programs throughout the country. So just the way the ROTC program operates is very effective," she says. "And you know, these students, as you see when you go to the awards ceremony at the end of the year, these students excel." •

Anticipating the Next BIG ONE

Tsunamis. Volcanoes. Hurricanes. Earthquakes.

Such disasters are the stuff of our greatest fears and, at the same time, our intense fascination. When they strike, we are reminded that, in the words of celebrity astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, "Here on Earth, we're still at the mercy of nature." That's why URI oceanographers, engineers, and geoscientists are at the forefront of research focused on predicting and mitigating damage from the "next big one."

By Todd McLeish

Indonesian island Anak Krakatau (at left) has been the site of frequent eruptions. One, in 1883, was catastrophic, killing over 36,000 people, mostly due to the tsunamis it generated. A 2018 eruption caused a tsunami that resulted in 420 deaths and extensive destruction and displacement. URI researchers Annette and Stephan Grilli (above) work on models, maps, and assessments to help prepare for potential tsunami risks.

When an eruption triggered a portion of Krakatau, a volcano on the island of Anak Krakatau between Java and Sumatra, to collapse into the sea just before Christmas 2018, it caused a tsunami that struck the coast of Indonesia with waves up to 36 feet high, killing 420 people and displacing 40,000 more from their homes. It also caused URI faculty members—tsunami expert Stephan Grilli, professor of ocean engineering, and volcanologist Steven Carey, Ph.D. '83, emeritus professor of oceanography—to spring into action.

Using tide gauges, satellite images, and photographs, Grilli created a computer model showing how part of the southwest side of the volcano slid into the water and generated the tsunami, while Carey and colleagues from the United Kingdom estimated the volume of the collapse based on radar images. This data allowed them to test ideas and validate other models to better prepare the United States for future tsunamis.

"We have seismic sources, volcanic islands, and underwater landslides in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans that could cause tsunamis to hit our coastlines," says Grilli. "So we're creating tsunami simulations and maps to show the potential inundation we could face."

Grilli and Carey are among more than a half-dozen URI faculty members who pay close attention to natural disasters around the world and conduct research aimed at better understanding these phenomena. Their efforts, and those of numerous alumni, are also helping to forecast and prepare for future disasters.

Targeting Tsunamis

A major tsunami that struck Papua New Guinea in 1998 was what Grilli calls his "eye-opener." Since then, he has studied tsunamis around the globe, historic and modern, and he co-led the first international expedition to investigate the cause of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that killed 230,000 people. He says tsunamis are usually triggered by earthquakes that cause the seafloor to shift upward, forcing the ocean surface to move up and creating a tsunami wave. Underwater landslides also commonly cause tsunamis.

"You don't need a big earthquake to trigger a landslide," says Grilli, who collaborates with his wife, associate research professor Annette Grilli, on many of his projects. "If you have sediment destabilized on the continental shelf, a little bit of seismicity could cause it to slide down the shelf slope."

Although the East Coast isn't at high risk for a tsunami, the Grillis work with the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program to model potential tsunamis in the region and create inundation maps so local emergency management agencies can better prepare for all possibilities. (Juan Horrillo, M.S. '97, associate professor of ocean engineering at Texas A&M University, is creating similar models and maps for the Gulf of Mexico.) They also conducted tsunami hazard assessments of U.S. nuclear power plants following the tsunami that caused a meltdown of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Japan.

Annette Grilli's role in these studies has been to assess the variability of wave impacts on the shoreline based on the tsunami's source—the movement of the seafloor, the landslide, or whatever else propagated the waves—to quantify local risk. Her interest in shoreline impact complements other work she does modeling the effects of severe storms on coastlines and conducting risk assessments for coastal structures.

"Tsunamis are extreme events, but rare, while severe storms are more frequent—and their frequency is increasing," she says. "People are still buying real estate along the water, and the risk to those buildings from sea-level rise, storm surge, and wave run-up is growing."

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES; NORA LEWIS

Mount Vesuvius, near Naples, Italy, seen from the ruins of Pompeii. The taller cone on the left is active, although it hasn't erupted since 1944. URI volcanologist Steve Carey says an eruption could be devastating because of the number of people living nearby.

Volcanoes—Past and Future

Since volcanic eruptions can play a role in generating tsunamis, Grilli occasionally collaborates with Carey, who has been conducting research on volcanoes since his days as a doctoral student at the Graduate School of Oceanography in the 1970s and '80s. When Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980, Carey and Haraldur Sigurdsson, emeritus professor of oceanography, hiked into the volcano, and Carey became mesmerized by the explosive nature of the eruption and the total destruction it caused. Now he is focused on forensic volcanology.

"I look at the geologic record and the deposits from older eruptions and try to reconstruct the source characteristics of the eruption," says Carey. "To do that, we study recent volcanoes and the kinds of deposits they produce and the kinds of eruptive processes that take place."

About 500 volcanoes on land have been active during modern times, mostly around the Ring of Fire, which encircles the Pacific Ocean. A handful of eruptions may be happening at any one time, each usually lasting for weeks or months. Two kinds of eruptions typically occur, according to Carey. Explosive eruptions generate large columns of volcanic gas and ash that can disrupt air travel and cause temporary climate cooling for a year or more. They also generate pyroclastic flows that can move at very high speeds. Effusive eruptions, on the other hand, generate slow-moving lava flows that pose little risk to humans and no significant gas or ash.

URI emeritus professor Steve Carey (right) and grad student Charles Mandeville visited the summit of Anak Krakatau in 1990.

Carey says that about 70 percent of volcanic activity occurs underwater, so the eruptions are seldom seen or reported. He has studied underwater volcanoes around the world, including the Kolumbo volcano in the Aegean Sea and the Kick 'em Jenny volcano in the West Indies. His latest project focuses on an underwater volcano off Baja California that produces a little-studied "balloon eruption," in which blocks of basaltic rock containing large pockets of gas float to the surface.

His most exciting detective work has been at the site of the 79 A.D. eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Italy, where his investigations with Sigurdsson helped unearth details about the characteristics of the eruption that buried the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. That's also the volcano Carey is most concerned about. It has erupted more than 50 times since it wrought devastation on Pompeii, but the last time was in 1944, and he says that the longer it sits idle, the larger the next eruption is likely to be. And because more than a million people live nearby, another big eruption could result in a terrible loss of life.

"It's actually advantageous for volcanoes to erupt frequently because it lets them blow off steam," Carey says. "If there's a long dormancy period, then a large volume of magma can accumulate, making the next eruption even larger. The work we did on the 79 A.D. eruption provided insights about what areas are potentially going to be impacted by a future eruption of Vesuvius. It's a sobering fact that a million people could be affected."

One of Carey's former graduate students, Charles Mandeville '81, Ph.D. '95, leads the Volcano Hazards Program of the U.S. Geological Survey, where he manages nationwide efforts to forecast hazardous volcanic activity and create early warning systems to help land managers and emergency responders minimize potential volcanic impacts. The program operates five volcano observatories with a staff of 200 scientists and a $30 million annual budget.

"We also have the equivalent of a sixth volcano observatory that responds to volcanic crises in developing countries throughout the world," Mandeville says. Congress recently reauthorized the National Volcano Early Warning System, "so we will be busy for the next five years closing monitoring gaps on very-high-threat and high-threat volcanoes in the U.S. and its territories and augmenting volcano monitoring networks where they need to be modernized," he added.

Whether a particular volcanic system will produce a dangerous explosive eruption or a less-worrisome effusive eruption is one of the underlying issues in URI oceanography professor Katherine Kelley's research. She aims to understand why the solid matter inside the planet sometimes melts to create the liquid magma that rises up to the surface and erupts at volcanoes.

"One of the conditions that is extremely favorable to the creation of magma happens when the inside of the Earth gets wet," she says. "When water from the ocean layer is brought down into the Earth's interior through plate tectonics, it causes the interior rocks to melt in a chemical reaction similar to when you add salt to icy roads in winter." And the more water the magma contains, the more explosive the eruption.

By studying the magma ejected from volcanoes—as she is now doing with volcanoes in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska and off the coast of Mexico—Kelley can reconstruct the eruptive process and calculate the water content of the magma before it erupted.

"By knowing what a certain volcanic system might have done in the past, it helps us look forward to what kind of behavior we can expect in the future," she says.

Hurricane Warning

While it is difficult to predict exactly when and where a major volcanic eruption will take place, it is getting easier to forecast hurricanes, thanks in part to the modeling efforts of URI oceanography professor Isaac Ginis. Recent improvements in hurricane forecasting are due largely to a better understanding of the role the ocean plays in determining the path and intensity of hurricanes, which has been the topic of Ginis' research for more than 25 years.

"Hurricanes draw energy from the ocean, and if the ocean temperature is higher, then hurricanes become more intense," he says, noting that as the changing climate warms the ocean, hurricanes will continue to grow in intensity. "We're also seeing that hurricanes are intensifying more rapidly, going from a Category 1 to a Category 3 or 4 within a day or two. And that's a big concern for forecasters who want to issue hurricane warnings in advance of landfall."

Ginis says hurricanes are now producing more rainfall than they used to, as well. "Rain comes from evaporation from the ocean, and the evaporation rate is a function of ocean temperature," he says. "The warmer the water, the more evaporation. So hurricanes are getting more moisture from the ocean, and because of the higher air temperatures, they can hold more moisture in the atmosphere and produce more rain. That will continue as global warming continues."

Ginis' hurricane models, which incorporate these complex interactions between the ocean, atmosphere, and storms, have been coupled with several of the models used by the National Hurricane Center to predict hurricanes and typhoons in the Atlantic and Pacific. His models are also being used by the U.S. Navy to predict storm intensity wherever Navy ships travel.

In recent years, Ginis has also worked with the Department of Homeland Security to improve predictions of the hazards that hurricanes can cause to infrastructure when they make landfall. "One of the major challenges in predicting hazards is that you need to make predictions of wind and flooding at specific geographical locations, like bridges or hospitals," he says. "General weather prediction models aren't specific enough for helping emergency management agencies make decisions."

Many of Ginis' former graduate students are now applying this research in a variety of contexts. At AIR Worldwide, for instance, Richard Yablonsky, Ph.D. '09, Michael Bueti, Ph.D. '14, and Austen Blair, Ph.D. '16, work together to develop analytical tools that insurance companies use to assess their potential risk from hurricanes and other natural disasters.

"Our role is focused primarily on the storm surge that's produced by hurricanes and typhoons in the U.S. and winter storms in the U.K.," says Yablonsky, a certified extreme event modeler and former recreational tornado chaser. "We're building computer models to simulate those types of events and give guidance as to what the risk is to our customers. We give them the best data possible so they can make more informed decisions about what properties to insure and how much to charge."

Hurricane Sandy, shown in this NASA image, was the deadliest and most destructive of the 2012 Atlantic storm season, killing 233 people and inflicting $70 billion in damage. URI professor Isaac Ginis uses Hurricane Sandy as a model to simulate hurricane impacts on Rhode Island in his efforts to better predict damage to specific locations, ultimately aiming to mitigate damage and fatalities.

PHOTOS: MORN THE GORN; RAGNAR AXELSSON; NASA, MODIS/ LANCE

At top, an aerial view of the San Andreas Fault in California's Sierra Madre Mountains. The fault is the boundary between the Pacific and the North American tectonic plates. URI researchers Yang Shen (above) and Matt Wei study underwater faults, which produce earthquakes more frequently than faults on land.

The Holy Grail of Earthquake Studies: Prediction

In an active year, there may be more than 20 tropical storms or hurricanes in the Atlantic and far fewer in the Pacific and Indian oceans. But there are likely many thousands of earthquakes each year, most barely detectable by even the most sensitive instruments and usually caused by shifts in the Earth's tectonic plates. Predicting when an earthquake will occur is what URI oceanography professor Yang Shen calls the holy grail of earthquake studies.

"We can't predict exactly when it's going to happen, but we have a good idea for intermediate-term or long-term predictions," says Shen. "We can see the probability of a big earthquake occurring in a particular place, but we cannot say which year or which day it's going to happen."

Shen has been interested in earthquakes since childhood, when a massive quake in China in 1976 killed 200,000 people. Since joining the URI faculty in 1998, he has studied earthquakes around the world, from Iceland to Easter Island and the Galápagos. In 2018, he deployed seismometers on the ocean floor off Hawaii to record the aftershocks from the eruption of the Kilauea volcano—which has been erupting off and on since 1983—to learn which fault system had been activated.

"We're still analyzing the data, but using all available data from land-based and offshore seismometers, we detected a lot of earthquakes, an order of magnitude more than were published by the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory," he says. Using this data, he is now engaged in a project to use machine learning to detect and locate earthquakes faster and more precisely than ever before. This effort should reveal smaller earthquakes and unknown fault lines that could be precursors to major earthquakes.

Among his collaborators is Matt Wei, URI assistant professor of oceanography, who studies earthquake cycles—the interval, magnitude, and location of earthquakes that repeatedly rupture a particular fault. Because most faults on land produce strong earthquakes hundreds or thousands of years apart, an accurate record of the cycles on these earthquakes is not available, making it difficult to understand earthquake behavior. But some faults beneath the ocean can generate magnitude 6 earthquakes every three to five years, which allows scientists like Wei to study the seismic cycles at these faults to gather information that may detect patterns in earthquake occurrence.

Using data from seismometers around the world, Wei is building computer models that show the interactions between earthquake cycles in ocean faults, which can then be applied to better understand the cycles and interactions in faults on land, like the San Andreas Fault in Southern California, which is overdue for a large earthquake.

Wei is also studying a phenomenon called slow earthquakes. "They have the same physics as earthquakes, but they happen very slowly so they don't generate earth shaking and don't damage buildings," he says. "But they do interact with large earthquakes, and we think slow earthquakes may trigger large earthquakes. We may be able to use them to predict large earthquakes.

"Slow earthquakes also release stress on faults," Wei adds. "If detected offshore in subduction zones, we expect future earthquakes to be smaller than previously thought."

Detecting slow earthquakes that occur beneath the ocean is especially challenging because it requires measuring the deformation of the seafloor down to the millimeter scale. Most scientists use a pressure sensor placed on the ocean bottom to detect movements of the seafloor, but it's difficult to separate tectonic movements from the changing ocean pressures. So Wei and Yang are using machine learning methods to better detect slow earthquakes from the seafloor pressure data, which may help in hazard assessments.

Not only can the seismic waves produced by earthquakes tell scientists about the characteristics of a particular earthquake, they can also be used to learn about other features of the Earth's structure. Brian Savage, associate professor of geosciences, partnered with Shen in using seismic data to learn why the oceanic crust in an area of the Western Pacific called the Ontong Java Plateau is about 35 kilometers thick, four or five times thicker than typical oceanic crust around the globe. He recorded the speed of seismic waves traveling through the Earth from earthquakes to create an image of the structure below the plateau.

"We're trying to understand why this large plateau was built, why it's so big, and why it's so weird compared to others," Savage says.

Savage uses a similar methodology to study how the Earth's tectonic plates look under California or the East Coast to better understand the processes that are shaping the planet. Seismic data from the Middle East has even helped him develop models to monitor underground nuclear explosions and differentiate them from earthquakes.

"Some countries want to hide the fact that they're testing nuclear devices, but those events have particular characteristics that look like explosions rather than earthquakes," Savage says. "When we measure them, there are uncertainties in how the waves propagate. Getting better estimates of how those waves move from one place to another helps us characterize those events better."

What Defines a Disaster?

Regardless of whether it's an earthquake, tsunami, volcano, hurricane, or climate change, what defines a disaster is its impact on people.

"The difference between a disaster and an interesting phenomenon is how it affects human life," says Bonnie Epstein, Ph.D. '99, who has taught a class on natural disasters at the Rhode Island School of Design for 11 years. "A flood where three people lose their house, that's a shame; but if 1,200 people lose their homes, that's more like a disaster. We measure it by the cost of what was lost, or by loss of life."

Much of her class focuses on how human-built structures can either mitigate disasters or make them worse. Flooding from hurricanes, for instance, is often worse in areas where an abundance of pavement causes rainfall to quickly run into rivers rather than be absorbed into the soil and wetlands.

Among her more esoteric recommendations for preparing communities for natural disasters is to tap into community memories from previous disasters. One reason why the 2010 earthquake in Haiti was so destructive, she says, is that there hadn't been an earthquake there since the 1700s, so there was little memory that such an event could happen and no memory of what residents should do. A more powerful earthquake in Chile the same year had a lesser impact because communities there regularly undergo earthquake drills and other preparations.

"That's why I'm a fan of public memorials to certain disasters, like the plaques noting the high-water mark from the Hurricane of '38," Epstein says. "Even if you don't discuss disasters with your neighbors, it's a reminder to pay attention." •

Aerial view from an Army search-and-rescue mission shows damage from Hurricane Sandy to the New Jersey coast in 2012.

PHOTOS: CAROL M. HIGHSMITH; COURTESY GSO; MARK C. OLSEN

Network

= CLASS NOTES =

Let your classmates know what you're up to. Reunions, gatherings, career or academic updates, weddings and birth announcements, retirements, exhibition openings, travel, or your favorite URI memories.

Submit notes and photos by email to urimag@uri.edu or online at alumni.uri.edu.

1946

Adele (Goldberg) Espo writes: "In reading the spring *URI Magazine*, I noticed there was no mention of anyone in Class Notes before the Class of 1954. Well, I am here from the Class of 1946! I am alive and well, now living in an independent facility in West Palm Beach, Florida. We came to West Palm in 1985, when my husband was transferred. Unfortunately he died in 1990. That is when I retired from teaching. I did a few more years of substitute teaching, then decided to do volunteer work. I volunteered for the State Attorney's office in adult abuse, as well as for the American Lung Association. I was an usher for Kravis Center and Drama Works. And I volunteered for my condominiums as vice president, secretary, treasurer, and then president for over six years. Doing all of this on different days, of course, but all during the same years, kept me content and busy until the pandemic. If we have a reunion at the University this year, I do hope to come for my 75th. Let's hear from more classmates from the early years!"

1949

Salimeno

Dr. Thomas Salimeno (Col. USAF ret.) recently celebrated his 95th birthday.

1957

Melvin Lipson of Newport Beach, CA., has been awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from Heritage Pointe (Seniors Living in Jewish Tradition). Along with establishing Heritage Pointe he has also devoted time and energy to other worthwhile charities, including FOCIS, the Jewish Federation of Greater Orange County, and the Jewish Community Foundation Orange County. As an officer of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orange County, Mel is a leader in the successful campaign to build the first home for special needs adults in our Jewish community, resulting in the opening of the Mandel House.

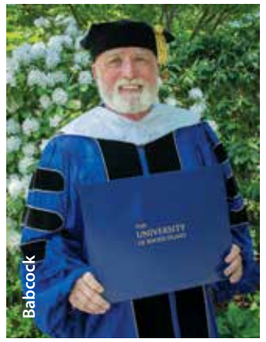
1960

Marvin Ginsburg writes, "I have just published my first novel on Amazon Books: *Send in the Clones*, a medical mystery thriller about doctors, hospitals, drug manufacturers, and genetic research companies all vying for the almighty buck and not truly motivated in helping the sick. Many of the patients involved were those I cared for over 45 years in the hospital. This was written in 1995 and just published (December 2020). It bears many similarities to the current COVID-19 pandemic in that I also created a pandemic of hepatitis in the book, in order to increase the world demand for liver transplants. This demand allowed me to create the genetic cloning of organs that involved a twisted plot designed to cheat the system and inadvertently induce serious harm to patients."

1966

Michael Cappuccilli, HS&S, of Milton, Mass., writes, "I met with many alums at Casey's in Wakefield for the annual Phi Mu Delta-Tau Kappa Epsilon Golf Tourney. I had not seen Steve Chubin '66, Tony Tetro '64, or Jack Reed '66 in years. Greg Gutter '66 always finds a good group each year. We lost one of our group, Frank Cuddy '66 in May 2008. He was missed by all.

Lana (Palmer) Orphanides published a book of poetry, *Searching for Angels*, in 2015 through Anthem Press.


Babcock

1968

Col. William P. Babcock '68, M.A. '72, U.S. Army, retired, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at URI's 135th Commencement in May. Babcock served full time in the Rhode Island National Guard for 21 years, and volunteered for active-duty tours in Afghanistan in 2002 and Iraq in 2005. He retired as a brigade commander and is a founding member and first president of the URI ROTC Alumni Chapter. His awards include the Combat Infantry Badge, Silver Star, two Bronze Star medals, Purple Heart, Air Medal, and the Rhode Island Cross. He now serves as coordinator of Veteran Mentors for the Rhode Island Veterans Treatment Court.

From the Archives

In 1942, during World War II, the U.S. Army assigned Army Specialized Training Units to all colleges and universities with advanced ROTC programs (all land-grant universities had them). The Army Specialized Training Units augmented military science programs and helped meet wartime demand for junior officers and skilled soldiers.

Army Specialized Training Unit cadets on the Quad, circa 1949.

1972

Charles B. Frost and his wife, Joan (Harcke) Frost '73 have been married for 51 years. They live in Maine with their 6th golden retriever, Sage.

Charles and Joan Frost hiking on Gorham Mountain in Acadia National Park, Maine, with their dog, Sage.

Gen. Leon LaPorte, see page 35

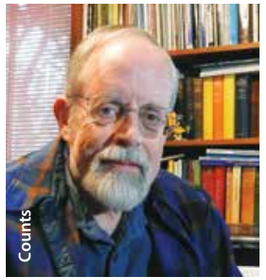
Col. John Petrella, see page 34

1969

Roberta Sabella Mansfield '69, M.L.S. '72, see page 9

1971

Kathryn (Stellitano) Ladd '71, M.L.I.S. '78, has been chosen as the 2021 CAACE (Connecticut Association for Adult & Continuing Education) Educator of the Year for her years of service to the field of adult education. She currently teaches United States Citizenship and GED Science and Math classes, in addition to being a trained National External Diploma Program (NEDP) assessor. In his nomination letter to CAACE, Dr. Mangiafico, Principal of the East Hartford Adult Education Program wrote, "Kathryn Ladd has spent her entire teaching career going above and beyond for her students. From working with expelled students, to those with disabilities, to attending the naturalization ceremonies of her students: Kathy always finds a way to help students succeed."


Counts

1974

Robert Counts '74, M.S. '81, retired in 2020 after 37 years as a CPA to begin a new career as an author. In December 2020 he self-published *Murder by Dinosaur*, a detective mystery based on a title given to him by his wife (only the title—no other idea). Since then, he has published *Aliens Don't Believe in Us*, a story from the point of view of one who visits his friend on Eroata (Earth). Both titles are available on Amazon. A third book is in the works.

1975

David Murray has been married to his wife, Janis Murray, for 40 years. Janis writes: "Dave learned coastal forecasting at URI. Then, on full scholarship for his master's at University of Wyoming, focused on storm forecasting. This combination, started at URI, made him quite valuable in "Tornado Alley," that part of the Midwest corridor—Texas north to Chicago—where people die or lose their homes during tornadoes. His unique forecasting skills pinpointing rural towns and cities, more than just "weather models" and graphics, saved lives and earned him 12 Midwest Emmies as best weathercaster. He went on to become the chief meteorologist/weathercaster for *ABC News* and *Good Morning America* by age 30. He is a former president of the American Meteorology Society (AMS) Broadcast Group. I am thankful I met him as a young reporter at KSDK-TV, the NBC affiliate, in St. Louis. He is the love I always hoped for. Retired now, we live in a house at the top of a mountain in Laguna Beach, CA, where we see the ocean as we wake each day, and Dave still feeds weathercasts daily to radio stations from his home studio.


Murray

1976

John Palumbo, owner and publisher of *Rhode Island Monthly* magazine, has been elected to the Rhode Island Press Association Hall of Fame. He will be formally inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Press Association's annual awards dinner on September 17, 2021 at the Quonset "O" Club.

1978

Andrea Davis '78, M.A. '91, writes, "As a local (South County, R.I.) surfer, swimmer, and ocean enthusiast who grew up in Narragansett, I am committed to doing something, however small, to combat our plastic problem. I created a sculpture—made from plastic waste collected on South County beaches—to raise awareness of how we might try to reduce the plastic waste that proliferates, especially during the very busy summer months. The s culpture started out on display at Java Madness in Wakefield, and I am hoping to take it to local beach pavilions this summer to raise awareness as people enjoy the ocean."

1979

Edward Cyr, M.S. '79, writes, "I authored a book titled *A Lifelong Journey to War and Home*, published by Covenant Books, Inc., Murrells Inlet, S.C. It's my history of being a second generation American of Italian and French ancestors, their contributions to World War II, my development in the 1950s, going to Rhode Island College for my B.S.N. in 1974, to URI for my M.S.N. in 1979, and to St. Joseph's School of Anesthesia for nurse anesthetists in 1982. Eventually, I was in the army reserves, active duty, and deployed to Kosovo in 2001, Iraq in 2003, and again to Iraq in 2006–07. I functioned, at times, as the chief of anesthesia within the 399th Combat Surgical Hospital (2001–07), and was in a forward surgical team in 2003. My book is available in print and Kindle."


Davis

Thomas Hagist '79 writes "In December 2020, I retired after 41 years with Electric Boat Corporation in Groton, Conn., building nuclear submarines for the United States Navy. I was most recently manager of nuclear operations after having previously held positions as nuclear test manager and chief nuclear test engineer. It was an extremely rewarding career that included participating in the initial sea trials on 19 ships."

1980

Scott Bill Hirst of Ashaway, R.I., was re-elected to his eighth nonconsecutive term to the Hopkinton, R.I., Town Council in November 2020. Scott can be reached at scottbillhirst@gmail.com.

David Jansen has joined Blank Rome Government Relations as Senior Advisor in the Washington, D.C., office. He brings nearly 30 years of executive and legislative branch experience in the areas of transportation; national security; and ocean, coastal, and wildlife science, conservation, and management to BRGR, most recently serving as the Democratic staff director for the Coast Guard & Maritime Transportation Subcommittee, House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, in the U.S. House of Representatives. Dave earned a M.M.A. with a focus on ocean and coastal policy and management from the University of Washington and a B.S. with a focus on wetland science and wildlife management from URI.

1981

James Gillis, a longtime reporter and columnist for the *Newport Daily News*, has been elected to the Rhode Island Press Association Hall of Fame. He will be formally inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Press Association's annual awards dinner on September 17, 2021, at the Quonset "O" Club.

Charles Mandeville '81, Ph.D. '95, see page 40

1983

Steven Carey, Ph.D. '83, see page 39

John Gouin writes, "I was recently selected the first podiatric surgeon in the history of the Veterans Health Administration to be a chief of surgical services."

Lynne Kaplowitz, HS&S, of Montville, Maine, is the executive associate and training coordinator for Maine Family Planning, volunteer council member for Midcoast Conservancy, and former judge for the Maine Women's Hall of Fame.

1985

Margaret Furtado is completing her residency in internal medicine at Roger Williams Medical Center after graduating from American University of Antigua College of Medicine last year. She returned to school to study medicine after a long career in nutrition. She earned a B.S. in food science and nutrition from URI in 1985 and a master's degree from Florida International University.

Collins & Barclay

1990

Thomas Collins '90, '91 teaches at Burr and Burton Academy in Manchester, Vt. He is proud that one of his favorite students, **Karson Barclay**, will be attending URI in the fall as part of the Class of 2025.

1991

Adrienne Gallo Girard '91, M.L.I.S. '96, was named director of the East Greenwich Free Library in East Greenwich, R.I., in August 2020.

1994

Dana Horton of Robinson & Cole was selected by Rhode Island Lawyers Weekly for recognition presented as part of the publication's 2021 Excellence in the Law Awards. She was honored in a special issue of the publication and celebrated during a virtual ceremony on April 8, 2021.

1995

Idrees "Lanre" Ajakaiye, see page 53

1997

Juan Horrillo, M.S. '97, see page 39

1998

Matthew Buchanan, see page 36

Soljane Martinez, see page 30

Domingo Morel, see page 27

1999

Bonnie Epstein, Ph.D. '99, received her undergraduate degree in geology/biology from Brown and her Ph.D. in geological oceanography from URI. Her interests lie at the junction of science, art and education. She founded the Rhode Island Museum of Science and Art (RIMOSA), a hands-on, interactive museum designed to inspire curiosity and encourage experimentation in older children and adults. Check out RIMOSA at rimosa.org and visit the museum on Westminster Street in Providence. They'd love to welcome URI alumni visitors! Epstein also teaches design-solution based bio/geo/chem courses at the Rhode Island School of Design. More from Epstein on page 43.

Tammy Warner '99, M.S. '06, see page 28

2000

Lt. Col. Cornelius "Tad" Granai '00, see page 33

2003

Holly Susi, M.A. '03, was appointed by Governor Daniel J. McKee to the R.I. Ethics Commission. Susi was selected from a list of recommendations by R.I. Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi. Susi is a professor of communication at the Community College of Rhode Island where she also serves on the Leadership Committee of the CCRI Faculty Senate.

1999

Eric Ouhrabka writes, "After years of admiring architecture and real estate I sold my business and became a realtor with 36d5 Realty. I owned and operated Starlight Limousine & Transportation for 10+ years, but real estate called me. I love exploring new homes, observing design and creativity, and helping people find the perfect home. I live in Warwick with my wife Susan, daughter Piper, 2 ½, and son Jack who will turn 1 in August. At URI I was in Phi Kappa Psi and participated in Semester at Sea. I recently became a Czech citizen, which will help with my love of travel and also be a nice gift to pass on to my kids. I would love to reconnect with old college friends and fraternity brothers. Please email me at eric@36d5.com so we can reconnect!"

1997

Radek Molenda, founder, owner, and president of Turf Master Inc. in Johnston, R.I., was awarded a contract from URI's Interfraternity and Panhellenic councils to install a putting green. During the pandemic, URI's fraternity and sorority leaders saw the need for more outdoor recreational space on campus, and thought a putting green would be just the thing. Molenda, who majored in turf management and horticulture, was excited to do this for the students and for URI. He personally designed the green, which is situated behind the Christopher House on Lower College Road.

2005

Kevin Lopes has been promoted to senior director of content business development and innovation at ESPN, responsible for overseeing the company's broader content business and innovation initiatives.


Waldron

2006

Sara Waldron writes, "Since graduating in 2006 I have lived in NC, SC, and now MA. I worked in the banking field for several years. I completed my masters in social work at Bridgewater State University in 2019. I loved my new career, working as a mental health clinician in Plymouth MA. I recently welcomed a baby boy, Logan, in December 2020. He has been the bright spot of our lives during the pandemic."

Brian Monteiro has joined the Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) as director of government affairs and public relations. He will be responsible for driving, creating, and implementing the society's legislative strategies with the objective of promoting the advocacy activities and to influence public policy at all levels of government. Prior to joining MDS, Brian was the campaign manager for Compassion & Choices. He also served as a congressional aide for Representative David Cicilline and as director of public affairs for Liberty Mutual Insurance. Brian earned a B.S. in political science from URI.

2007

Kristina Cinquegrana Petrilli writes the following in response to learning of the passing of William Klenk, professor emeritus of fine arts: "Oh my heart. Every painting I create, I stand back and contemplate 'What would Klenk do?' An inspiration and legend of the Fine Arts Center. I hope there will be a scholarship created in his name, or perhaps a new studio named after him. I have to go through all my work from his classes. Klenk was a standup guy, had the best laugh... Gosh, I'm so saddened."

2009

Richard Yablonsky, Ph.D. '09, see page 41

2010

Nicole Nazy, Pharm.D. '10, has published her second manuscript, *Improving Staff Engagement and Development Using Pharmacy Professional Advancement Career Tract Program*. While it is a mouthful, it is a fantastic piece on how to initiate a program to serve as a foundation for involvement, opportunity, and professional growth for staff within a department. This was a subsequent publication to her first manuscript, *Hybrid Models Can Transform Team Chemistry*. Nazy is the pharmacy supervisor of operations at Morristown Medical Center. She is also a member of the Healthy New Jersey 2030 group, striving to improve the health of her community. Nazy continues to use her creative problem-solving skills to integrate, innovate, and develop her cohesive team.

"Cuba" by William Klenk. Mixed media collage. 1998.

William Klenk, professor emeritus of fine arts, died March 28 at the age of 91. He joined URI in 1960 and retired in 2012. He was a master of the art of collage and painted portraits and still lifes. His work has been displayed in collections including the Newport Art Museum, the RISD Museum of Art, and Fidelity Investments in Boston.

BIRTHS AND ADOPTIONS

Heather (Gorman) King '95 and Scott King welcomed Emma Marie King on August 29, 2020.

Joshua Dowiot '02 and **Rebecca (Thomas) Dowiot '03** welcomed Anna Lucretia Dowiot on December 28, 2020.

Parker Kuklinski '13 and **Geri Kuklinski, Pharm.D '16**, welcomed daughter Eleanor Grace Kuklinski on March 26, 2021.

Michelle Saunders, M.A. '10, was named vice president, talent management, at HarborOne Bank. In this role, Saunders is responsible for building on the bank's talent management team with a continued emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

2011

Colin Giblin has been elevated to the position of vice president at Turtle Fur, a leading headwear and accessories brand in the outdoor, snow sports, and lifestyle markets.

Nate Menard has joined Verrill Dana, LLP in its Portland office as an environmental and energy law attorney.

2013

Olivia Dolphin, see page 50

Parker Kuklinski writes: I met my wife, Geri Kuklinski, Pharm.D, '16, on the first day of orientation and we've been together since. URI holds such a special place in our hearts. We have so many amazing memories from our time there. We receive the URI magazine every season and check in on the alumni updates. The photo of Geri and myself with Rhody is from the URI 10 Under 10 award ceremony in 2019, where she received an award from the College of Pharmacy. We welcomed our future Rhody Ram, Eleanor Grace Kuklinski, on March 26, 2021. (See Births and Adoptions above.)

2014

Patrick Brown wrote to share that his company, Rent Sons, which he started just over four years ago, has changed its name to Surv, to reflect their commitment to building stronger communities through service. He adds that, to date, they've "given 1,000 people a job!"

Michael Bueti, Ph.D. '14, see page 41

2016

Austen Blair, Ph.D. '16, see page 41

Parker Kuklinski '13 and Geri Kuklinski, Pharm.D. '16, posed with Rhody the Ram at the URI 10 Under 10 award ceremony.

PHOTO: MAYA ALBANESE

Andrew Pilkington produced a feature film in collaboration with Zeno Mountain Farm. Andrew was both a producer and screenwriter. *Best Summer Ever*, a feature length musical, was shown at the 2021 SXSW Film Festival. More than half the cast and crew are people with disabilities. USA Today ranked the film among the top 10 in the 2021 SXSW Festival, and it received positive reviews from *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Rotten Tomatoes*.

Andrew Pilkington '14 celebrates with colleague Matt Marr after reaching their Kickstarter goal to fund their film, *Best Summer Ever*.

2019

Jessica Cawley, B.A. philosophy and political science, has been admitted to and will be attending Harvard Graduate School of Education this fall following two years of AmeriCorps service with the college access nonprofit, College Advising Corps in Atlanta, Ga. The mission of College Advising Corps is to increase the number of low-income, first generation, and underrepresented high school students that enter and complete higher education. At Harvard, she will be earning a Master of Education in education leadership, organization, and entrepreneurship with a concentration in higher education.

2020

Ellen Cummings, M.L.I.S. '20, was named full-time reference librarian at East Greenwich Free Library in East Greenwich, R.I., in November 2020.

Afonso Gonçalves Neto, Ph.D. '20, see page 8

2021

Charles "Charlie" Dumas '21, see page 36

Mia Luzietti, see page 8

Frank Martinez, M.A. '21, see page 15

Justin Moore, see page 3

Julia Santini, see page 10

Edhaya Thennarasu, see page 15

Sarah Tyson, see back cover

ENGAGEMENTS AND WEDDINGS

Mark Finne '95 (Phi Gamma Delta) and **Christina Carathanassis '96** (Alpha Xi Delta) of Jersey City, N.J., became engaged on January 9, 2021. A Rhode Island wedding is being planned for 2022.

= ALUMNI HAPPENINGS =

We're back together again this fall!

VISIT ALUMNI.URI.EDU/CALENDAR FOR DETAILS

October 1–3, 2021

ALUMNI & FAMILY WEEKEND

Including a 50th Reunion Celebration and Golden Graduate Reception

October 7, 2021

DAY OF GIVING

October 23, 2021

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

= NICHE =

Wizard Queen

Olivia Dolphin '13 transfigured her childhood love of young adult fantasy into a multifaceted creative career.

When Olivia Dolphin '13 was in third grade, her mother brought home a new book for her. The book, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, was about an orphan boy who went to wizard school. She had no idea then how, like an ancient prophecy waiting to spring forth, the book and its sequels would consume her life. "There was a chunk of time when it was just the first three books, and I would rotate between them," she remembers. By the time the fourth book, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, came out, she was attending midnight releases with fellow Potter-heads, and contributing fan fiction to Internet sites about the battles of Harry, Hermione, and Ron against the forces of darkness.

"There was this robust community where those of us who felt a little different, and preferred reading in the library to going to gym class, could find each other," she says. "You could write fiction or songs and put them online and people would care." She began volunteering at Harry Potter–themed conferences, sharing at open mics and fangirling to "wizard rock." Eventually, while double-majoring in writing and rhetoric and music performance at URI, she launched her own literary magazine—*Wizards in Space*—originating from an inside joke about whether mages can survive in the cosmos, and a desire to create a space for those struggling to find an outlet beyond the Potter-verse.

"We try and uplift the voices that are not being heard, and create a safe space for new writers and creators," she says. Now on its fourth issue, the magazine publishes everything from original science fiction and fantasy to poetry. After graduating from URI, Dolphin earned a master's in writing and publishing at Emerson College, and worked as a copywriter for jewelry designer Alex and Ani, which has its own Harry Potter-inspired line. She now works for insurance company Liberty Mutual as a user experience content strategist, which informs her creative work. "It helps me think critically about the functionality of the website and how users are going to feel when they hold this book."

Dolphin is now creating an anthology of her own poems with the working title, *Letting Go and Other Lessons I Didn't Want to Learn*. She also released a song this past winter, "This Damn Christmas," channeling the frustrations of holiday quarantining into a soulful piano ballad, and plans to release an EP of her music in the coming year. Meanwhile, *Wizards in Space* continues casting a spell on its several hundred readers from some 20 countries. "We want to reach 10 issues," she says, "but beyond that, we have lofty goals of building a community with workshops and writing retreats where young writers can feel like they are really engaging in this space." •

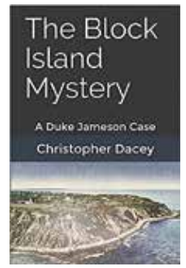
—Michael Blanding

"We try and uplift the voices that are not being heard and create a safe space for new writers and creators."
—Olivia Dolphin on Wizards in Space

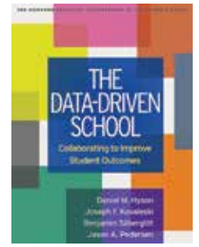
PHOTO: KERI CASTRO

= BOOKSHELF =

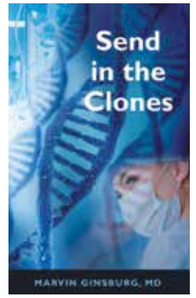
Check out the latest books by alumni authors—and share your recently published (within the last two years) book at **uri.edu/magazine**. Or send a cover image, along with author, URI grad year, book title, and year published, to urimag@uri.edu.



The Block Island Mystery: A Duke Jameson Case
Christopher J. Dacey '88, M.B.A. '11
(2021)



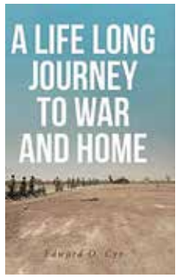
The Data-Driven School: Collaborating to Improve Student Outcomes
Jason A. Pedersen '92, Daniel M. Hyson, Joseph Kovaleski, and Benjamin Silberglitt
(2020)



Send in the Clones
Marvin Ginsburg '60
(2020)

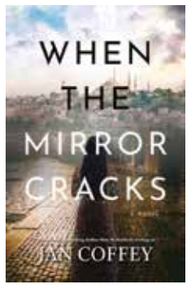
108 Days of Gratitude: The Big and the Small of it During the COVID Pandemic
Barbara 'Babs' Vitale '71
(2021)

The Overlords: Mission of the Kings
Michael Squatrito Jr. '87, '88
(2019)

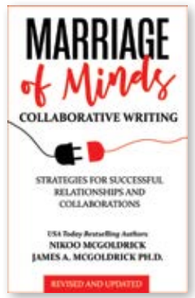


A Life Long Journey to War and Home
Edward Cyr, M.S. '79
(2020)

Nikoo and Jim McGoldrick write collaboratively under various pen names, including Jan Coffey, May McGoldrick, and Nik James. The prolific authors have even written a guide to successful collaborations and relationships, which just came out in its second edition. "Writing together," they say, "has been a life's work and a life's love. And when a publisher calls and says, 'Would you be interested in writing…?' —our answer is always, 'Yes!'"

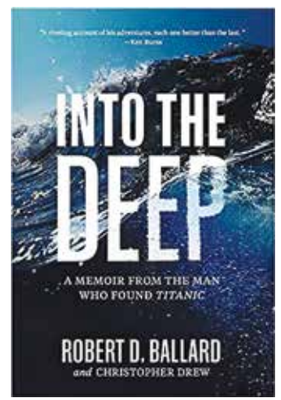


When the Mirror Cracks
Nikoo K. McGoldrick '84 and James A. McGoldrick, M.A. '89, Ph.D. '91
(2020)



Marriage of Minds: Collaborative Writing (2nd edition)
Nikoo K. McGoldrick '84 and James A. McGoldrick, M.A. '89, Ph.D. '91
(2021)

High Country Justice: Caleb Marlowe Series #1
Bullets and Silver: Caleb Marlowe Series #2
Silver Trail Christmas: Caleb Marlowe Series #3
Nikoo K. McGoldrick '84 and James A. McGoldrick, M.A. '89, Ph.D. '91
(2021)



Into the Deep: A Memoir From the Man Who Found the Titanic
Robert D. Ballard, Ph.D. '75, Hon. '86
(2021)

= IN MEMORIAM =

Louise (Anthony) Greene '44
Mary (Coletta) Ogni '44
E. Catherine Passarelli '44
Janet (Wilde) Rusk '46
Herbert Greeley '48
Claire (Gornstein) Krasner '48
Joseph Baptista '50
George Conrad '50
Raymond Dwyer '50
Arthur Gold '50
Gerald Lefoley '50
Donald Rowe '50
Leonard Gilman '51
Donald MacDonald '51
Joseph Nasby '51
Alton Wiley '51, Hon. '82
Richard Berger '52
Marjorie (Dinwoodie) Campanella '52
Barbara (Haigh) Haigh '52
Richard Maines '52
Joan (Murdough) Boucher '54
Barbara (Carlson) Christopher '54
Harry Keenan '54
Nancy (Gifford) Keenan '54
Raymond Lundgren '54, M.S. '60
Richard Millar '54, M.S. '60
William Piez '54
Philip Gladue '55
Charles Gross, M.S. '55
Arthur Hellwig '55
Maurice Newman '55
Robert Avila '56
Rosemary (Damato) Barnett '56
Eugene Edwards '56
Mary (Kler) Heisinger '56
Edward Kenyon '56
Joseph Short '56
Paul Crepeau '57
Joseph Gallucci '57
Marvin Hodosh '57
David Janes '57
Wesley Bray '58
Alexander Kennedy '58
Charles Lynch '58
William Schnitzer '58
Joseph Campo '59
Warren Munroe '59
Shirley (Freeman) Putney '59
Edith (Dahlgren) Cruise, M.A. '60
Philip Mancini '60
Joseph Travisano '60
Beverly (Crins) Benson '61
Robert Gilbert '61
Gholam Kazemian '61
A. Edward Pearson '61
Oliver Roy '61
Walter Swistak '61
Donley Taft '61
David Webber '61
Carolyn Chirnside '62
James Dinunzio '62
Carol (Fitzpatrick) Elliott '62
Peter Nevola '62
Laura French '63
Jeanne (Ogrodnik) Hartigan '63
John Henschel '63
Carolyn (Steere) Hurdis '63, M.S. '64
Laurence Miniati '63
Sandra (Berthiaume) Rhine '63
Mary Shields '63
Edward Wilbur '63
Betty Creelman '64
Henry Cruciani '64, M.S. '71
Ralph Ruggieri '64
Edward Coady, M.B.A. '65
Stephen Hess '65
John Lyons '65
Albert Morin '65
Richard Palmisciano '65
Frederick Rogler '65
William Dwelly '66
Cecelia (Amman) Ferro '66
Florence (Haman) Kerop '66
Ronald Lareau '66
Jerilyn Alford '67
Susan Capuano '67
Carolyn (Carpenter) Dickison, M.A. '67
Cheryl (Wyka) Fitzgerald '67, M.S. '75
Barbara (Lehman) Rubin '67
Alvin Siegel '68
Paul Silvia '68
Alice Smith '68
Kenneth Beebe, M.A. '69
Margaret Franco '69
Nancy (Jenest) Holt '69
Anne (Bulkley) Jordan '69
Donna (Mottram) Miller '69
Alec Sinel '69
Donald Cerullo '70
Francis Donahue, M.P.A. '70
Roger Ferland, M.A. '70
David Leach '70
Linda (Rignanese) Newman '70
Stuart Zarchen '70
Ann (Rosen) Collins '71
Carol (Denisewich) Ingram '71
John Jeannotte '71
William McAllister, M.C.P. '71
John Meakin '71, M.P.A. '73
Thomas Mitchell '71
Judith Perlow, M.L.I.S. '71
James Cartwright, M.M.A. '72
William Corrente '72
Arthur Keegan '72
Thaddeus Piekos, M.L.I.S. '72
Emmitt Blankenfeld '73
Patricia Callahan, M.L.I.S. '73
Dianne Card '73
Paul McDonald '73
Paul Monaghan '73
Alison O'Rourke, M.A. '73
Ruth (Nagle) Whitford '73
Joseph Cote '74
Ann Crawford, M.L.I.S. '74
Robert Dano, M.S. '74
Michael Eiger '74
Anne Greenleaf, M.A. '74
James Kidd '74
Paulette (La Cava) Osterman, M.A. '74, Ph.D. '02
Steven Patriarca '74
Steven Silvia '74
Franklin Arnold '75
Joyce (Hoffman) Fast, M.A. '75
Richard Hopf '75
Naurita Waters '75, M.S. '85
Murn Nippo, Ph.D. '76
Jeffrey Cohen, Ph.D. '77
Donald Judge, M.L.I.S. '77
James Montague, M.A. '77
Ellen Shalvey '77
Wayne Smith '77
Robert Auerbach '78
Barry Beaudoin '78
Minnie Gertz '78
Phyllis Hyde '78
Cathy (Skeirik) Roberts '78
Gary Engler, M.S. '80
Priscilla (Johnson) Foley '80
Margaret (Dillon) Parmelee '80
Kevin O'Halloran '81
Marguerite (Dade) Thomas '81
Steven Carr '82
Christopher Cooney '82
Diane Ferrara '82
Deborah Branch '83
Kenneth Coia '83, M.S. '85
Bruce Elias, M.S. '83
Cynthia Allott '84
Celia Catlett, Ph.D. '84
Robin (Anderson) Higgins '84
Barbara (Tappero) Kinnaman '85, M.A. '90
Janice Beaucage, M.B.A. '87
Tracey McKenzie, M.S. '89
Maureen Donovan '90
Susanne Duggan-Ball '90, M.P.A. '07
Charles Cofone '92, M.L.I.S. '99
Barbara Feeley, M.S. '92
Teresa Tripp '92
Jason Twombly '93
Jennie Dunnington '94
Donald Horowitz, M.S. '94
Elizabeth Deblois, M.M.A. '95
Todd Harraka '95
Sharon Lux, M.L.I.S. '95
Jaqueline Martineau '95
Anthony Marchetti '96
Steven Giguere '97, M.S. '01, M.B.A. '03
Michael Batalon '00
Matthew Beltrami '01
Jeffrey Ferland, M.B.A. '01
Erik Elsdoerfer '02, M.S. '05
Ashley Karstrom '03
Michael Tarasevich '03
Anne Brennan, M.A. '05
William Higgins '11

FACULTY AND STAFF

Paul S. Cohen, professor emeritus of cell and molecular biology
Thomas Grigalunas, professor emeritus of environmental and natural resource economics
Jean S. Hyland, associate professor and study abroad program coordinator
William (Bill) Klenk, professor emeritus of fine arts
Cheryl McCarthy, M.L.I.S. '73, professor emerita of library and information science
Richard I. Millar '54, M.S. '60, associate professor emeritus and former chair of the Department of Animal and Veterinary Science
Thomas Morin, professor emeritus of languages
Murn M. Nippo, Ph.D. '76, professor emeritus of animal science
Susan Thomas, former senior lecturer, Department of Music

Lanre Ajakaiye is redeveloping this property in the Olneyville section of Providence. It will be a state-of-the-art public space, housing areas for youth education and empowerment, entrepreneurship, and cultural events.

=CLOSE UP=

Becoming a Change-Maker

Idrees "Lanre" Ajakaiye '95 says the example of his father and his URI education are what spur his work in social entrepreneurship and leadership.

What remained of the building was blackened with soot—the first floor and part of the second had been gutted by fire. It was a knockdown, an eyesore, the picture of urban decay.

That was what then-11-year-old Idrees "Lanre" Ajakaiye '95 thought when his father pulled up to the property he'd just purchased. Ajakaiye listened as his father shared his plans for this property on the corner of Cranston and Superior streets in Providence. As his father talked of his vision for the building, Ajakaiye felt something shift inside himself.

"That was the genesis of my loving real estate: That building seemed so ugly, but my father, with his big West African accent, said, 'No, don't worry.' That was social entrepreneurship happening right in front of me."

Ajakaiye now heads a major development of his own: the 25 Bough Street Community Initiative in the Olneyville section of Providence, a $1.8 million redevelopment project. The abandoned 15,000-plus-square-foot space will house an interactive cultural and heritage museum, youth and women's empowerment programs, an athletic facility, businesses, and a multipurpose function hall—a state-of-the-art public structure. "It will be a community-anchored facility providing spaces for youth education and empowerment, for entrepreneurship, and for the celebration of life events," Ajakaiye says. He has devoted four years to the project thus far.

Recruited to URI by the Talent Development program and the track team, Ajakaiye says he developed the habits of mind, tenacity, and leadership skills to tackle a project the size and scope of 25 Bough Street as a URI student. Ajakaiye successfully balanced the demands of studies and athletics with several other activities, including becoming a resident assistant and an orientation leader, while also deejaying for WRIU and taking advantage of experiential learning opportunities, including the Washington Leaders Fellowship, which gave him the opportunity to work for U.S. Sen. Jack Reed and also for BET, the Black Entertainment Television network, where he did public relations and marketing. "While I can't say I reflected on it much at the time, looking back, I see I developed great leadership skills at URI," Ajakaiye says.

After college, he began his career as a real estate broker in Manhattan, then earned a master's in marketing and worked for nationally known corporations MetLife and AAA Northeast. Ajakaiye is now head of membership for the National Fire Protection Association, an international nonprofit organization located in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Helping people—that's another calling Ajakaiye first learned from his father and mother, who immigrated to the United States from Nigeria in the 1970s.

"I saw my father take an abandoned property, buy it back from the bank, renovate the whole thing, and put tenants in it. I have that same purpose. My father was a change-maker and that's how I am—a person seeking to positively impact the lives of youths and underserved populations. Helping people do whatever they want to do—that's a reward that makes me feel good." •

—Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

PHOTO: NORA LEWIS

= SCENIC ROUTE =

Galilee Glow

The fishing village of Galilee, in Narragansett, R.I., is a familiar scene, especially if you've hopped the ferry from Galilee to Block Island. **Rich Epstein '91** captured the scene in dramatic sunset light. Epstein, who majored in theater and history, is a professional photographer and a realtor. See more on Instagram: @richepsteinphoto

= CAPTION THIS =

Photo Caption Contest

Do you have a funny idea for a caption for this photo from the URI Archives? Email your caption to urimag@uri.edu or respond at uri.edu/magazine.

Submit entries by September 15, 2021

This photo from the URI Library Archives is dated February 27, 1952. The straightforward description is, "A picture of studio director Pauline Bregnan and William J. Toohey '55 in the URI Radio Station room." Your caption ideas and responses, URI Magazine readers, were anything but straightforward. In fact, they were quite creative.

Here are the winning captions, and a few other notable submissions.

SPRING WINNERS

WINNING CAPTIONS

"The Beatles? They're
no Kingston Trio.
One-hit wonder for sure."
—Richard McCahey '69

"It's called Rock & Roll. It's
a fad that will never last."
—Michael Kenny '81

RUNNER-UP

"So Larry says if you play
this one backwards you'll hear
the name of every
Dorr Hall resident...ever."
—Timothy Anderson '97

- **Reader Janis Murray** (wife of David Murray '75) was inspired by this photo, along with the poetry story in the spring 2021 issue, to share a submission in verse:

"I am curious about you.
Your smile captures my mind.
I study vinyl for my own interest,
Your attention surprising,
Divine"

Read the rest of Janis' poem at uri.edu/magazine.

- **From URI's first lady**, the Rev. Lynn Baker-Dooley:

I love this photo as proof that women were involved at our radio station in 1952, but I have to say, without that knowledge, this photo reeks of mansplaining. So the caption might read:

"Let me explain how this round
thing works, honey."

- **WRIU DJ John Austin Murphy**, aka The Monsignor, submitted this caption:

"This record is perfect for your
show on WRIU!"

Listen to The Monsignor's show, *Roots & Offshoots* on WRIU (90.3 FM or streaming live at wriu.org), Friday mornings from 6–8.

PHOTOS: COURTESY URI DIGITAL ARCHIVES

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Kingston, RI 02881 USA

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Permit No. 1214
Providence, RI

Torrent Forms by Sarah Tyson. Ceramic with glaze and nails, 12" x 9" each. 2021.

=EPILOGUE=

Torrent Forms

Mixed-media artist Sarah Tyson '21 says she "draws inspiration from organic forms and patterns in nature," which she likes to contrast with one of her favorite materials, nails. Tyson, who cites Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama and German artist Günther Uecker as inspirations, was selected by art department faculty for this year's David Ketner Memorial Art Award for excellence in studio art.

Tyson received an undergraduate research grant to work with associate professor Ben Anderson on a public sculpture centered on climate change, which will be installed on the URI Kingston Campus. •